# Record of Christian Work

A Magazine for the Parlor and Study

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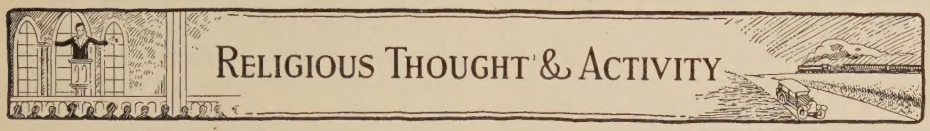
*Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness!*
*Psalm 65. 11.*




**Every year 756 ministers** vacate pulpits of the Methodist Episcopal church through retirement and death.

**It is the children** who must bear the real struggle in China's present search for freedom. They are the ones whose rice bowls are emptied by marauding soldiers, whose education is stopped by civil war. They go to school eagerly when they can, and learn new ideals.—Priscilla Holton.

**Whether Thomas A. Edison** has much use for religion or not it appears that his wife places some value upon it, according to "King's Business." Speaking before the Daughters of the American Revolution not long ago she is reported to have made an appeal that was both patriotic and spiritual, ending with these words:

"Isn't there some strategic plan by which we can get back on the old road?. Is it impossible to reintroduce family prayer? Our young people need us in their domestic troubles."

**In Five Tongues.** Rev. W. C. Johnston of the West Africa A. B. C. F. M. mission tells of a communion service at Bafia at which more than 3000 people were present:

"We had the people seated according to their language. I preached in Bulu, and three young men translated into different native languages to their people, all speaking at once. The French administrator was seated on the platform, and the French school teacher translated the sermon into French for him, so that there were four interpreters going at the same time."

**The recent significant plenary meeting** of the World's Y. M. C. A. Committee in Geneva was attended by seven representatives from the United States. Fifty-four representatives from 23 nations met for four days. There are 33 national movements affiliated with the World's committee. There are 21 other countries already organized, but not yet affiliated with the World's Alliance of National Movements. There are 56 countries unoccupied, of which 20 should be included in a five-year expansion program.

**Now that church and state in Chile** are separate the government has decided not to pay the priests who used to go into all the schools to give religious instruction, but any priest who cares to give such instruction voluntarily may have the use of the class rooms to teach those who care to attend.

Some of the Protestant leaders went to the president of Chile and asked him if equal privileges would be given to the Protestants if a sufficient number of pupils in a school should ask them to come and teach them, and the reply was a most emphatic affirmative.

**India's schools** are not subject to the same criticism for over-development of their physical plants as those of China, as expressed by Bishop Grose recently, according to a cable from Bishop Badley of Bombay. He says:

"Earnestly hope Bishop Grose's criticism China's missionary educational plans will not be interpreted by American Methodism

as applying to India. My personal conviction, based on 27 years' service in India, is that no such condition prevails in India Methodism. Our educational plants require enlargement and development to care for constantly growing demands and opportunities of most encouraging situation. Trust you will give this statement to your readers on my behalf."

**A Methodist church** was contemplating a large building project and was appealing to the entire community for support. In some way an appeal for a subscription reached the Roman Catholic priest. He wrote courteously in reply, stating that the rules of his church did not permit him consistently to contribute toward the building of a Protestant church; "but," he added, "I see that a part of your project involves pulling down your old building, and as there is nothing in my religious principles that forbids my helping to wreck a Methodist church, I enclose my check."—"Congregationalist."

### Student Christian Organizations.

Student Christian societies existed in a few of the American colleges as early as 1825. In that year the Philadelphian Society of Princeton was formed. An attempt in the early part of the century to launch an intercollegiate organization did not come to fruition, although the idea remained a dynamic one. Here, in brief outline, is the history of this vital movement of Christian youth:

1870—Indiana State Y. M. C. A. convention met. It was the first to favor extension of the Association movement into the colleges.

1877—On March 27 invitations to the first intercollegiate conference, to be held in connection with the Louisville International Convention of the Y. M. C. A., were sent out by the Philadelphian Society at Princeton.

1877—June 6-9 saw the birth of the Intercollegiate Young Men's Christian Association movement at the Louisville convention. Twenty-one colleges from 12 states were represented.

1886—The Intercollegiate Y. W. C. A. was formed at Lake Geneva, Wis.

1886—The Student Volunteer Movement was organized at Mount Hermon, Mass. Over 11,000 Volunteers have since sailed for overseas service.

1927—June 6-13 saw the launching of the new Student Division of the National Y, with freedom to meet the new challenges of the present and future.

### Times of Testing in Darkest Africa.

The testing of converts on the mission field generally comes soon and severely.

Two of our first converts have been passing through severe trial. Only a short time after they had broken with the pagan worship the largest Wurkum festival of the year was held at Bambur. The elders and young men went to the spirit houses in the morning and offered sacrifices to the departed spirits and to their chief deity, the Basali. Janga and Madoko did not go. The elders were angry with them, and went to their house to take them by force. They escaped by a back way, and spent the rest of the day in the bush. When they returned they were cursed and reviled. They did not answer back, but entered their houses, quietly thanking God for deliverance from their enemies.

Janga's wife committed what in the eyes of the people was a great wrong, which could be atoned for only by two years of sacrifices. To us it would seem a small thing. In her effort to catch a child that was about to fall from another woman's back she accidentally struck the back of the woman with her hand. This is regarded as an ill omen. As soon as it was reported the elders came to Janga demanding that he offer sacrifice. He refused to do so. They held consultation, and then threatened him if he refused to obey them. He still stood out against them, saying that he had left off all these things to follow Jesus. After a while they came again, asking him to give just a little seed to make oil for the sacrifice. He refused. He came to us saying that if he had given the little they asked he might just as well have done all they asked. He said further that if he had yielded the light the Lord had given him would have become darkness. He had won his second victory.

Pray for these converts!—C. W. G. in the "Lightbearer."

### A Wizard's Confession.

We then had our meeting, and a few hundreds gathered, and we thank God for that

night. Many gave their lives to Christ, about 30. Some of their confessions were thrilling.

One of them was a wizard, who confessed about midnight. He said he was known all through the village as a wizard. When people wished to make trouble between husband and wife they would go to him; or if they wanted an animal belonging to another they would go to him and have him write something on a piece of paper, and then the desired evil would take place. He asked if it would be right for him to use his power to make people love each other, instead of writing to make people sick or die.

I said: "This writing of witchcraft is all wrong, is of the devil, and you must have nothing to do with it!"

He was with us all this morning.

Another man said to me: "Do you think Christ will forgive me?"

I said: "Have you accepted him?"

"Yes," he said, "but my sins are great." He gave a long list of sins,—murder, thieving and many other things. He had other confessions not less terrible than these.

Then there were many families quarreling, and they were reconciled. It continued until nearly two o'clock this morning.

One of these cases was this: An enemy had beaten a young man with an ax so badly that pieces of bone came out of his head. It was wonderful that he did not die. His father wished to entertain thoughts of hatred and revenge, and so put these pieces of bone in a box and kept them constantly in his pocket for years, waiting for an opportunity to revenge the injury. Yet by the grace of God he became reconciled to his enemy. I asked him to give up those pieces of bone, and he gave them away. It was hard for him to do this, and showed that God had really touched his heart.—Nile Evangelistic Campaign Report.

### Tokyo Y Moves Onward.

Two of the several hundred young men enrolled last winter in our Association School of Religion had a vision of extending the courses by means of a monthly correspondence course magazine. Practical minds discouraged them, but they were in earnest. This past week the fifth monthly magazine of 160 pages made its appearance. The paid subscription list of those taking the courses has reached to nearly 3000. A few of the courses thus reaching people all over the empire include: Outline Studies of the Old and New Testaments; History of Christianity; Japanese Religious History; Science and Religion; Christianity, and Its Relation to Social Science; Modern Thought Tendencies, etc.

Not long ago, being caught in a downpour, I stopped under a shelter for the worst of the storm to pass. Within a few minutes a boy came across the street and handed me—a total stranger,—an umbrella and a piece of paper on which he had laboriously written:

"I lend you a umbrella you return me at any time it suit your convenience."

It is for the boyhood of Tokyo, such as this youngster represents, that the Association is laying extensive plans for increased boys' work. Our boys' camps this past summer were more successful than ever before, both in attendance and interest taken in a carefully worked out character-building program. Since summer we have had a gift of the large tract of land and the equipment where we have had our camp for the past five years. This will give new impetus to enlarge and develop more fully this phase of our work.

In a recent number of the official "Metropolitan Police Journal" an article contributed by the well known Mr. Noguchi, mentioned the work of the Tokyo Y. M. C. A. After discussing the alarming rate at which cafés and resorts of questionable character have been springing up, the author proceeded to consider possible solutions to the problems arising therefrom. It was interesting to note that a man of this type should have said that we must look to the Y. M. C. A. for help in building character and helping offset these other types of influence. This is an example of the growing influence which the Association is coming to have in Japanese society. It is also the reason why we are so anxiously awaiting the day when we will have been able to com-

### Dedication.

Father, let me dedicate
All this year to thee,
In whatever worldly state
Thou wilt have me be!
Not from sorrow, pain, or care
Freedom dare I claim;
This alone shall be my prayer,
Glorify thy name!

—Lawrence Tuttiett.

plete our entire building and so be able to render in full that service which is expected of us.

With cordial best wishes to our many friends, whose letters and prayers are deeply appreciated,

Faithfully yours,
(Signed) Russell L. Durgin.

### Young China Asks Some Questions.

"The Chinese pastor in Medan, Sumatra, recently came to our school and spoke to the seventh class on the beginnings of Christianity in China," writes the Rev. C. J. Hall, a missionary of the Methodist Episcopal church, from Medan. "After the address the boys asked him some questions which show that something is going on in their minds. Here are some of the questions:

"Why did you (a Chinese) become a Christian?

"Which is the best religion in the world? Why?

"What efforts are used in converting the people of China?

"What causes so many strikes in China?

"Why is there always war in China?

"How and why does China favor Christianity?

"Are our brothers and sisters in China well treated by the white races?

"Why can't Chinese people conquer the other nations, since they are the largest nation?

"If Jesus will save us, why won't he save those who live near Hoang Ho from being killed by the floods? If he does, more people will believe in him.

"Why is it advisable to make China a Christian land?

"Why do some Christians keep Sunday and some Saturday?

"It is hard for the folks here to think that there are good as well as evil-minded white folks,—Christian white and non-Christian white. All white folks are supposed to be Christian. The fact that white folks from Europe oppress the Chinese rather disturbs their thinking. If that is Christianity, of course they will have none of it, and who will blame them?

"The young men in our school are thinking upon vital topics,—upon international subjects in so far as they relate to their own country. And especially are they interested in Christianity and its relation to China."

### The Y. W. C. A., a Factor in World Education.

Miss Frances L. Garside.

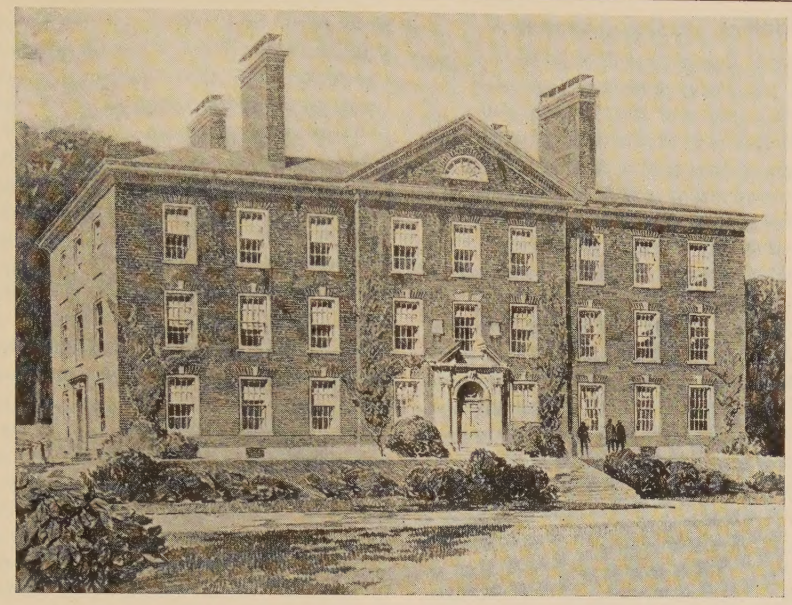
"How is the Young Women's Christian Association an educational factor?" is a question often asked.

In Brazil the Association has been instrumental in bringing about the following plan. Realizing that for intelligent girls' work knowledge of the actual situation and environment of girls between the ages of 10 and 21 is essential, the president of the Brazilian Educational Association has approved a plan for a survey to be made under its auspices. The Y. W., because of its numerous activities for girls of these years, is an important coöperating agency.

The government of Mexico is aiming to establish 5000 schools in five years, working under the disadvantage of a lack of qualified teachers. To offset this, the Cultural Missions have been established, which send out groups to the rural schools to train the teachers "on the job." The director of one of these schools sought, and was given, assistance by the Y. W., which will delegate one of its staff to give a series of lectures on education through recreation and the social improvement of the community.

At the recent conference of the Pacific Institute of International Relations in Honolulu the unanimous recommendation of the delegates was that a program of education is the best means of dealing with international problems. The Y. W. has been a factor in educating the people in Hawaii for many years, holding classes in its various centers, reaching the foreign-speaking through the International Institute, and going out to those who cannot come to it with a Little House on Wheels, which, though having no outward resemblance to Minerva, is a real sister. Those within the House demonstrate to the groups that gather the best American methods for everyday living. The group that gathers is cosmopolitan: Koreans, Filipinos, Japanese, Chinese, and Hawaiians.

In China, now that the Mass Education Movement, with the alphabet reduced to a workable 2000 characters, is stimulating the desire to learn to read and write and make the simplest computations, the Young



*Palmer Hall, New Recitation Building at Northfield Seminary.*

Women's Christian Association is taking advantage of this awakening by conducting night classes for women and girls. They come to school after a long day's work in the home or in the factory, sometimes the wife with her husband's approval, and sometimes without.

There has been a university in Tartu, Esthonia, which for four hundred years has shut its doors in the face of all women and those men who are Esthonians. The World War shook open many doors, these doors being of the number. Women are thronging the classrooms, eager for an education. Obviously, they are the more serious. Because of the universal poverty of the people of Esthonia these young women are compelled to drop out every few months to earn money for going on. The Y. W. is assisting seventy girls through college by finding a worldwide market for the embroidery for which they are famous, girls as far away from Esthonia in miles and thinking as Seattle selling it for them.

It would not take a great stretch of the imagination to visualize the Blue Triangle as a school bell.

## MEDICAL FRATERNITY ITEMS.

### Christian Physicians Unite.

Howard A. Kelly, M. D., of Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, spent two days in Buffalo recently, speaking at four gatherings. The visit had been arranged primarily by a group of Christian physicians, and the first meeting was held in the afternoon in the lecture room of the Buffalo Academy of Medicine. Several hundred doctors were present. Dr. Kelly's address was on the life and work of John Hunter, reputed England's greatest surgeon in the latter half of the 18th century: a firm Christian believer.

A banquet that evening brought together some 300 members of the Christian Laymen's Association of Buffalo, some leading doctors, ministers, nurses, and others. Here Dr. Kelly spoke on the obligations of the full Christian life.

Followed a public meeting in a hall seating 3500, crowded to capacity. An invitation had been facetiously extended to all the Kellys in the city directory to attend, about 750 in number. Dr. Kelly's subject was "A Scientific Man and the Bible."

Next morning at 7.30 a breakfast for physicians and their wives was attended by 50 physicians and four nurses among a total of 96 persons. "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!" gave Dr. Kelly his text for this group. A unanimous standing vote was taken to form a nationwide Christian Physicians' Association.

### Ridding Persia of Leprosy.

The local Persian officials, after hearing of what was being done for the lepers, became interested, and at the suggestion of the governor of Kohrassan he and six other high officials met with me in our home and discussed what could be done to improve the general condition of the lepers, in order that Persia might eventually be rid of this loathsome disease. As a result a Society against Leprosy (Injahman zid Juzahm) was organized, with the governor as president and the chief of the Imam Riza Shrine as vice-president. A few days later a larger meeting was held and funds collected, with which they are building a large, clean, dry caravansary village to house the lepers in place of the low, damp, dark huts in which they now live. This building is nearing completion, and will be greatly appreciated by the lepers.

It is gratifying to note the interest of these Persian friends, and their constructive actions, which were entirely upon their own initiative. Their energetic secretary has secured a number of gifts of clothing, sheep and foodstuffs, which he has taken out to the lepers at various times for distribution among them.

At Christmas time, after the telling of the story of the nativity, the woollen scarves from America were given to the lepers, as well as some candy and fruit. Later in the winter woollen mittens were given to the children and to some of the women. This year woollen sweaters are being knitted by a number of Christian women and others, and will be given out to the lepers when the winter arrives.

The condition of the lepers is improving decidedly, and although there are no cures as yet, the majority of those receiving injections freely admit that they are in much better health than they were before, and the disease is being arrested, if not actually cured.—H. A. Lichtwardt, M. D., at Meshed, Persia.

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## LABRADOR HAS ANOTHER HOSPITAL.

Last summer the new hospital erected at St. Anthony, Newfoundland, by the International Grenfell Association, was opened by the governor Sir William Allerdyce. The proceedings were most successful, and were marked by a personal message from King George and the announcement that a knighthood had been conferred on Dr. Grenfell for his humanitarian services. Also there took place the unveiling by Lady Allerdyce of a War Memorial Tablet in the waiting room of the hospital to 23 men from that district who died in the Great War. It was in her brief address that Lady Allerdyce gracefully referred to Dr. Grenfell as "a fair and gentle knight."

Sir William's address following the laying of the corner stone was as follows:

"Accompanied by Lady Allerdyce, I have come to St. Anthony today at the invitation of Dr Grenfell and his associates to unveil the corner stone and formally open the new hospital.

"Thirty-five years ago two occurrences took place in Newfoundland that have had a marked influence on her subsequent history. In 1892 St. John's was destroyed by what is known as the Great Fire, and while the ruins of the city were still smouldering Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell arrived from England in a small ketch-rigged sailing-vessel. Notwithstanding the dire results of the conflagration, and that the citizens were alike hungry and homeless, their fortitude and philosophy were astonishing and their cheerfulness amazing. Despite their sufferings, a keen interest was shown in Grenfell's proposed medical work, which would perish if it failed amongst the fisher-folk in Northern Newfoundland and Labrador. This was the commencement of that wonderful work which we associate with the name of Grenfell and commemorate today in the formal opening of the new hospital.

"During three and a half decades the doctor has given unstintedly of his best to the sick and the needy on this coast, and has established a standard of service which is not only the admiration of the Anglo-Saxon world, but has inspired hundreds to give not only monetary support, but devoted and self-sacrificing service to the cause which he has so much at heart.

"It is a little difficult to conceive what the real conditions on the Labrador were, and at times still are, but the following conversation may help to bring us to a better understanding.

"Picture to yourselves a northern port, a decrepit and leaking boat, in which was a half-clad brown-faced figure, who, after watching the doctor in his schooner for some time, inquiringly remarked:

"'Be ye a real doctor?'

"'That is what I call myself.'

"'Boy, us hasn't got no money, but there's a very sick man ashore, if so be you'd come and see him.'

"The doctor went ashore and was conducted to a tiny sod-covered hovel. An old man, very sick, was coughing his soul out in the darkness of a lower bunk, while a partially-covered woman gave him cold water to sip out of a spoon.

"During more than a third of a century Grenfell has worked with whole-hearted devotion and a self-effacement that has won the esteem and admiration of all, and may well serve as an example to each one of us. His work has resulted in the creating of four hospitals, seven cottage hospitals, two orphanages, three public schools, as well as a large industrial establishment which has proved invaluable. His influence has led hundreds of United States citizens and others to follow his standard and give not only handsome monetary donations, but months of gratuitous loving service to the people of Labrador and Newfoundland. From the most learned physicians, surgeons, and skilled nurses to the University student, who has frequently performed the duties of a laborer, one and all have been inoculated with what I venture to call the Grenfell spirit, the secret of which is the performance of unselfish deeds.

"Is it surprising, then, that Dr. Grenfell's great work should have received recognition from one whose knowledge of every part of his empire is well known,—His Majesty the King?"

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## HOW KOREA IMPRESSED A CHINA MISSIONARY.

Before I have been in China too long and Korea becomes but a vague dream, I want to give you some of my impressions of Korea and the Koreans.

It was certainly an interesting experience for us to spend a few months with the group of fine hospitable missionaries in Korea, who treated us as though we were angels in disguise and who gave us an opportunity to see their splendid work.

### Lindbergh.

Was it so strange that on his daring flight
He reached the goal, with all the world athrill?
Perhaps One walked upon the waves that night,
And seeing faith, he bade the winds "Be still!"
—H. M. C. in "Bible in New York."

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Of course the medical work interested us most. A hospital ward in Korea would have to be labeled so for you to recognize it. I used to think the wards in China extraordinary enough, not white and immaculate like the ones at home, for white is the mourning color of the Chinese, but with blue spreads on the beds and dark furniture in the room. But there is nothing at all in a ward in a Korean hospital,—not a chair or table or stand. The floor, which is warm to your feet,—for a fire is kept burning underneath it,—is covered with thick oil paper. When a patient comes in a mattress is spread on the warmed floor for him, and a pot of hot rice water set down beside him, and these are all the hospital conveniences he needs. You can imagine how hard it is to do dressings or give treatments, bending over double or squatting down on the floor as the Koreans do.

They take off their shoes upon entering a house. It is a funny sight to see in front of the hospital or church long rows of rubber, turned-up shoes, and it causes quite a problem in the schools, the boys and girls are so apt to get their shoes mixed up, and a scrap is often the outcome. Shoe-racks with compartments have been resorted to in many schools.

Koreans wear white the year round, except at holiday seasons. At first we felt we were in a country of ghosts, as we walked in and out among the flowing white robes and skirts. The women are kept busy washing and ironing the white garments. The latter process is a most original one. A large flat stone slab is used, the clothes, folded evenly, are spread on the slab, two women squat down on either side armed each with two wooden clubs, and they beat the articles smooth in a rhythmic sing-song fashion. Often late into the night the even tap-tap of the ironing clubs will break the stillness. They say it takes over an hour to iron one garment.

The men wear the craziest-looking little

hats, perched up on the top of their heads and tied under their chins with strings. The hats are made of stiff transparent material, and are stove-pipe in shape, with a narrow stiff brim. They do no good whatsoever that I can see, for they neither shield from the sun nor keep out the cold. The women are hatless. They carry heavy loads on their heads instead, balancing them as perfectly as the African women do.

Babies are strapped on the backs of mothers or older brothers or sisters, and their little heads almost wobble off when they fall asleep in this uncomfortable position. It is not an uncommon sight to see

*Heedless, in "Pilgrim's Progress."*

a woman with a big fat baby strapped to her back balancing a stone water jar on her head and carrying a basket full of edibles on her arm.

A thrilling spectacle is the inside of a church, with the floor space simply crowded with white-clad figures, sitting cross-legged on the floor, the women on one side, and the men on the other, all rocking back and forth as they sing, way off the key, a hymn to the tune of "Old Black Joe." A church can hold a lot more people if they sit close together on the floor, and most of the services we attended were thus packed. The only furniture is the minister's pulpit, the organ, and a few benches kindly added for the use of foreigners.

Another impressive sight was out in one of the little hamlets on Sunday afternoon, a tiny little hut no bigger than a single Ford garage packed with about 200 heathen, shouting in unison John 3. 16. After the regular church and Sunday school activities are over for church members, missionaries, pastors and Christian school boys and girls disperse to the villages, nestled in the sides of the surrounding hills, and gather around them swarms of ignorant but eager children, to tell them the story of Jesus in song and narrative. I feel that this is a fine work, and that seed sown in this way is bound to bring forth plenteously some day.

I could write forever about the leper work in Korea. There is a regular little colony, out from Kwangju quite a bit, situated at the end of a valley, the loveliest country! Here the lepers are divided into two groups, men and women, and everyone out there is or has been a leper. They do all their own work: gardening, taking care of the stock, carpentering, tinning, building, sewing, washing and ironing, teaching, nursing and treating of wounds, and operating. There is a trained boss over each job. Some of the most intelligent ones act as doctors. There is a sort of nurses' training school, and the lepers can go into the Kwangju Hospital, sit in the special leper room, which connects by a window to a "clean" room, and attend lectures. Manual work is one of the best treatments for leprosy. One symptom of the disease is contracture of the fingers, with atrophy of the muscles of the hand, but constant use of hands and fingers prevents the loss of them entirely. There is a large church building with a tiny glassed-in room at one end, where a non-leper preacher may address the congregation. The Koreans and Japanese are much afraid of leprosy, and a leper who does not come to the colony does not have much chance for life. A good percent of the lepers become Christians. All of them seem content and happy.

Our five months in Korea were rich with experience, and we are most grateful for them, but we are certainly glad to get back to China. Everything Chinese seems good! We are boning away at the Chinese language again, hoping before many months to be able to return to Soochow, and take up

our work in the hospital there once more. Conditions are still unsettled. The country is overrun with soldiers. The common people are losing their enthusiasm for the Nationalist party, and are looking now for any change, even a return to the old régime, just to have peace and quiet again. Missionaries who have spent the summer here in Shanghai are, many of them, discouraged and disheartened. But better times are ahead of us, we feel sure. Faith is what is needed now,—faith in God, who will not allow the great work that has been begun here to decay and perish; faith in the Chinese Christians, who are suffering persecution for their Master; and faith in ourselves, to accomplish the impossible through Christ which strengtheneth us. How much we need your support and help and prayers! —Mrs. Philip B. Price, Shanghai, October 1927.

## EUROPEAN NOTES.

**Professor Harnack** recently passed his 75th birthday. On that occasion they published a catalogue of his writings. Between 1873 and 1927 these numbered 1503, of which several would have sufficed by themselves alone to establish his reputation as a savant.

**The Turkish Chamber of Commerce** is reported to have petitioned the National Assembly at Angora to declare the Christian Sunday instead of Friday the official day of rest, according to a Constantinople dispatch to the "New York Times."

Advocates of the change assert that the Muslim religion does not forbid its adherents to work on Friday, and that the observance of Sunday would prevent an enormous economic loss. It is significant of the changing sentiment of republican Turkey.

**"During the existence of the republic,"** according to a leaflet prepared by President Masaryk, "the Czechoslovakia church has been established with 525,333 members, who with few exceptions have seceded from the Roman Catholic church: and according to all accounts the number today is much greater. During the same period the number of persons who left the Roman Catholic church is 724,507. . . . . The number of Protestants of various denominations and all nationalities in the republic is now almost a million."

**Consider an allegory!**

In the little Swiss town of Baden are two churches, one Roman for a thousand years, the other Protestant. Each had its separate chime of bells. When it became necessary recently to recast the more ancient bells it was decided to give them a tone in harmony with those of the other church, that so the calls to worship, though sounding in different tones, should yet form a perfect harmony. It was the thought of simple folk far remote from the dissonances of the larger world, but to none but saints, I think, would the thought have occurred.

*Formalism, in "Pilgrim's Progress."*

The recasting of bells would appear to be the church's task, if the harmony of tones is to be attained.—"Spirit of Missions."

**German Church Regains Strength.**

Rev. Adolf Keller, D. D., director of the Central Bureau for Relief of the Evangelical Churches of Europe and European secretary of the Federal Council of Churches, reports "the return of Protestantism in Germany to a position of strength and influence."

"The churches of Germany were so disrupted by the political and economic consequences of the peace that for a time their continuance was threatened. The economic

situation in Germany is by no means normal. There are still vast armies of unemployed, and much suffering and want. But since the inauguration of the Dawes plan and the stabilization of the mark there has been such an improvement in the position of the church as to enable it to help the churches in other lands, instead of receiving help itself, as has been the case hitherto. Home mission and foreign agencies are taking up their tasks once more. The social welfare work of the churches is again moving forward."

### The Petition in Behalf of Roumanian Baptists.

President E. Y. Mullins.

Baptists have grown rapidly in Roumania since the World War. They now number between 20,000 and 30,000. They are full of zeal, devotion and the spirit of sacrifice. But church and state are united in Roumania with the Greek Orthodox as the official church. The state church has an official in the cabinet. The result has been that the more Baptists have prospered the more they have been persecuted. They have been put in jail, their places of meeting have been closed, they have been refused permission to baptize their candidates in public, their children have been denied their rights in the public schools unless they submit to the Roumanian state church, they have been prevented from buying property for church building purposes. Evangelists have been prevented from going from place to place to preach. One of the worst of the facts connected with the persecutions is the effort to stop by law the preaching of the gospel. Baptists have been classified with anarchists and Bolshevists by the state church, and persecuted accordingly.

Repeated efforts have been made to correct this state of affairs. Appeals have been sent to the government officials protesting against the persecutions. Many fair promises have been made. Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke, secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, has held frequent interviews with officials of the government in Roumania, and with the state church. While there are nearly always promises of reform the persecutions always continue.

We are sure that the only method of impressing the Roumanian government is to create public sentiment against its methods. The petition which is being circulated is to be sent to the League of Nations as a protest. It is desired that tens and even hundreds of thousands of names of Baptists and others shall be signed to these petitions. The signatures are to be written in ink if possible, in order that they may not be easily erased. This petition is being prepared under the auspices of the Baptist World Alliance, which represents all the Baptists of the world and is in a position to make a strong protest against the persecutions in Roumania. It is believed by those who are best informed on the subject that when the Baptists of the world have made this protest and submitted it to the League of Nations a favorable effect will be produced, and even if legal action is not taken the publicity of the matter will influence the Roumanian government.

When Queen Marie visited America last fall the president of the Southern Baptist Convention, Dr. George W. McDaniel, appealed to her for a hearing for our persecuted Roumanian brethren. The queen refused to grant such a hearing.

This petition is being circulated all over the world, and Baptists everywhere are urged to coöperate in getting as many signatures as possible.

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## PRAYER.

**A Simultaneous Night of Prayer**—all night or half night,—at 1400 centers in the United Kingdom was held last November under the auspices of the Salvation Army. Intercession was made for blessing upon the Army's extraordinary evangelistic effort known as the Great Salvation Siege, and for a universal revival of pure religion.

Praying people of all denominations were invited to take part and make confession before God, intercession for the sins of the nation, and consecration to God for the salvation of the people.

**About ten years ago** a number of missionaries in Korea founded the Prayer Covenant for the purpose of praying for a revival throughout Korea, and much fruit was gathered in different parts of the field as a result. But the Independence movement gradually interfered with the prosperity of the Covenant, and of late years it

has lapsed, though individual members have maintained the spirit of prayer.

At Wonsan Beach last summer Mr. Bull, of the Southern Presbyterian Mission, convened a meeting of those interested in the matter, and it was decided to revive the work of the Prayer Covenant, but with a change of name, so that it will now be known as the Korea League of Prayer. Membership is open to all who will continue to pray for a great revival in Korea. Those who desire to be enrolled are requested to communicate with Mrs. Gerald Bonwick of Seoul.

**Let us look** for a moment at the connection between prayer and victory!

There was much prayer, public and private, during the war, but throughout the years 1914 to 1917 there was an obstinate objection in both church and government to any official act of prayer, with consequent deadlock on all battlefields. At last, in November, 1917, at the time Mr. Balfour made the celebrated declaration with regard to a National Home for the Jews in Palestine, King George proclaimed January 6 (Sunday), 1918, a day of national prayer. Thus, the year 1918 opened with official intercession.

The Germans launched their desperate storm attack on March 21, and on the 25th the archbishop of Canterbury issued a call to prayer. Then, on August 4, the king with both Houses of Parliament and the whole nation made supplication to God. The day was similarly observed throughout the British empire. On August 8 the battle was fought on the Somme which General Hindenburg has stated was the fatal day for the German army. Thereafter there was a collapse upon all fronts.—Sir Andrew Wingate.

## CURRENT THOUGHT.

**No longer** is the Church of England bound to the rigid and unprovable theory of apostolical succession.—Dean Welldon of Durham.

**The great majority of Chinese Christians** will not ask how a man is ordained, but how he lives, how he preaches, and how he serves.—Timothy Tingfang Lew.

**Some are entirely evangelistic** in their theology, and yet they are not evangelistic in their practice. They do not press the battle to an issue. They do not have the note of urgency. They do not preach with the passion of the cross. They seem afraid to go out and compel men to come in. They do not call sinners to the altar. They do not pray in the homes of the people. They do not visit as a pastor in the offices and places of business where the men of their congregations are found. To use the language of Old Testament ritual, the altar may be there and the sacrifices may be on it, but where is the fire? What is most needed is the fire!—Bishop Mouzan.

**Clearly a line must be drawn** between religion and theology. One is the truth of life in its warmth and radiance, its joy and pathos; the other is a system of reasonings and conjectures by which man seeks to justify, clarify, and interpret the faith by which he lives. Religion is poetry, theology is prose. It is the difference between a flower garden and a book of botany, a manual of astronomy and a sky full of stars. As one does not have to know the facts of botany in order to enjoy a bed of violets, so one need not be an adept in the mysteries of dogma in order to live the religious life. Men lived by the grace of religion ages before theology was born.—Joseph Fort Newton.

**The Bible** has left its indelible imprint upon the ages. Suppose that by some strange chance in a single night the ethics of the Bible entered into the imagination of

### Universal Week of Prayer.

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America joins with the World's Evangelical Alliance of Great Britain in inviting all churches and followers of Christ to unite in a Universal Week of Prayer at the opening of the new year. The devotional program will not only be circulated through all English-speaking lands, but will be translated for use in over fifty countries.

Monday—Thanksgiving and humiliation.
Tuesday—The universal church.
Wednesday—Nations and governments.
Thursday—Missions.
Friday—Families, schools and universities.
Saturday—Missions in the homeland.

"During the Week of Prayer from Sunday January 1 to Saturday January 7 let us all unite with our brethren in many lands to demonstrate afresh the release of God's power as we pray with one accord in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord!"

the whole world. Suppose it took possession of every human life; reshaped to its own pattern the ideals, the wills, the politics, the tempers, the literature, and the appetites of mankind; and the whole world awoke with the Christian religion supreme! Certain results would immediately follow. There would be no liar's tongue, no rogue's brain, no thief's palm, no scolding wives, no faithless husbands, no wrecked homes, no broken-hearted mothers. Hunger and strife would be vanished, wars would cease, and the sword and spear and shield would be hung up forever.—Rev. Z. T. Johnson.

*Superstition, in "Pilgrim's Progress."*

### Lost—a Boy!

Not kidnaped by bandits and hidden in a cave to weep and starve and raise a nation to frenzied searching. Were that the case one hundred thousand men would rise to the rescue if need be. Unfortunately the losing of this lad is without dramatic excitement, though very sad and very real.

The fact is, his father lost him. Being too busy to sit with him at the fireside and answer his trivial questions during the years when fathers are the only great heroes of the boys, he let go his hold.

Yes, his mother lost him. Being much engrossed in her teas, dinners and club programs, she let the maid hear the boy say his prayers, and thus her grip slipped and the boy was lost to his home.

Aye, the church lost him. Being so much occupied with sermons for the wise and elderly who pay the bills, and having good care for dignity, the minister and elders were unmindful of the human feelings of the boy in the pew, and made no provision in sermon or song or manly sport for his boyishness. And so the church and many sad-hearted parents are now looking earnestly for the lost boy.—"School Index."

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### Calendar Dates for 1928.

Jan. 1, Sunday—New Year.
Feb. 12, Sunday—Lincoln's Birthday.
Feb. 19—Shrove Sunday.
Feb. 22, Wednesday—Washington's Birthday.
Feb. 22—Ash Wednesday. Lent begins.
April 1—Palm Sunday.
April 6—Good Friday.
April 8—Easter Sunday.
May 17, Thursday—Ascension Day.
May 27—Whit Sunday (Pentecost).
May 30, Wednesday—Decoration Day.
Fourth of July—Wednesday.
Sept. 3, Monday—Labor Day.
Nov. 11, Sunday—Armistice Day.
Nov. 29, Thursday—Thanksgiving Day.
Dec. 25, Tuesday—Christmas Day.

### Coming Events, 1928.

John Bunyan Tercentenary.

Tenth Quadrennial Student Volunteer Convention at Detroit, December 28, 1927, through January 1. 3500 college students expected.

International Missionary Council meeting at Jerusalem March 24 to April 8.

Reformed Church in America Tercentenary. The first minister of the Dutch church, now the Reformed church, landed on Manhattan Island on Friday April 7, 1628.

Quadrennial General Conference of the M. E. church at Kansas City begins May 1.

June. 20th Century Pilgrim Fathers expedition from England to America, organized by Dr. Sidney Berry, secretary of the Congregational Council of England. About 1200 Congregationalists are expected.

Baptist World Alliance Congress at Toronto June 23-29.

10th World's Sunday School Association Convention at Los Angeles July 11-18.

Rhode Island Episcopalians are planning to fittingly observe the 200th anniversary of Bishop George Berkeley's residence in that state, the two significant dates being September 6, 1928, the anniversary of the bishop's setting sail for America, and January 23, 1929, the anniversary of his landing in Newport.

# Respecting Mirth.

An article in a recent number of the "British Weekly" by Dr. George Morrison, entitled "On Laughter," challenged our attention. Curiosity respecting the treatment of such a theme from a scholarly Scotch minister led us to read it. So full was it of sane understanding of human nature and spiritual insight that we could wish it might be reprinted in full.

Dr. Morrison calls attention to the fact that laughter is the unique prerogative of man and distinguishes him from the animal creation.

"Not only is laughter human," according to Dr. Morrison, "it commonly goes along with greatness." So true do we believe this to be that we would venture to challenge anyone's claim to greatness to whom was denied the ennobling sense of humor; and we certainly would hesitate to believe in the spirituality of one who could not laugh heartily.

How is it, then, that we nowhere read of Christ laughing? "Are we driven to the one conclusion that he never laughed?" asks Dr. Morrison. His reply to the inquiry is to us an evidence of Dr. Morrison's own spiritual discernment. "May it not be," he says, "that the smile was so continual, even amid the darkness of his sorrows, that it went unmentioned like other common things?"

The nature of a man's laughter reveals much of his character. The guileless laughter of a child comes from a true and noble soul. Some men have so high an estimate of themselves that conceit has choked out spontaneous mirth. That which some of us love to remember of certain great souls was their clear and guileless laughter. Such mirth was Henry Drummond's. The joyous note of Dr. Jowett's mirth came from a guileless soul, and we cherish the memory equally with the greatest of his pulpit utterances. It was in the ingenuous laughter of D. L. Moody that the purity of his soul and humility of his spirit found genuine expression.

Surely if the pure in heart see God, genuine innocent mirth is of the nature of sincerest praise.

# Where He Got His Nerve.

## Rev. Thomas Yates.

*"My times are in Thy hand."—Psalm 31. 15.*

When the ships of the British Navy had more yards and masts than they have now, there was one difficult evolution which was the show piece of the navy. If I tried to describe it I should get tied up, but it meant men springing to the rigging like cats, and climbing swiftly to the fore-top. Twice in two days the sailor who was captain of the fore-top had missed his footing, fallen to the deck, and been killed. Seamen are superstitious, and when the third captain of the fore-top in that week was named, they were sorry for him. He was sorry for himself. He was not a very good man, and sometimes he drank as he should not. He had sense enough to know that this made things more dangerous for him. His name was Billy Hicks. But when the time came, he went through the evolution without a single mishap, and the crew breathed more easily when it was done and there was no accident.

A week later an officer of a sister ship was aboard. He said to the Captain, "Have you a man called Hicks? I want to see him." When Hicks came, the officer began to read a line or two out of a little note book he carried. Billy Hicks went very red in his face. On a dark night that officer on his ship had seen lights flashing, and had asked his signal officer to take them down, if they were really signals. It was those signals he was reading out of his little book. "You're making fun of me, sir," said Billy Hicks. "No," said the officer, "but tell me about it."

Then Hicks said, "It was like this. I was made captain of the foretop when two had been killed, and I was in a blind funk. I asked the officer if I might go up to the tops and practice some signaling and he says to me 'Go ahead.' When I got my light going, I just said my prayers with it. And now you've got it. Except that I've quit drink and low-down things, and stand on my own feet now, sir." And the officer said, "Good man!"

I will read you the signal the officer took down when he read the lights on a dark night.

GOD - THIS - IS - BILLY - HICKS - SIGNALING - IVE - BIN - PROMOTED - CAP - OF - THE - FORE - TOP - GOD - IME - FRIGHTENED - GOD - I - AIN'T - MUCH - FEARED - OF - DEATH - BUT - YOUR - HOLINESS - WHEN - I - GO - UP - TOMORROW - GIVE - ME - NERVE - TO - PLAY - THE - MAN - AND - GOD - GIVE - ME - WHAT - I - USED - TO - FEEL - WHEN - I - KNELT - AT - MY - MOTHER'S - KNEE - AND - SAID - OUR - FATHER - GOOD - NIGHT - GOD - YOURS - TREWLY - BILLY - HICKS.

That was how and where the captain of the fore-top got his nerve.

## How the "Land Burner" Has Been Transformed.

My heart is all aglow today for I have just been visited by one of Christ's trophies in the gospel, a former powerful devil-doctor, now living in the faith and fear of Christ: once hauling in big professional fees, now the humble servant of Jesus.

But before I tell you of his present service and his joy in it, let me begin where God the Holy Spirit began with Musokantanda (which means, "The land burner")!

He was startled by the turning to God first of his wife, and then his daughter. Was he missing something in life? Surely no! Was he not the great medicine man of the district? He would cling to his ancestral manga, the witchcraft medicines and magical charms to ward off evil.

One night, after setting his fishing nets in our lovely Lake Mweru, God visited him, whether in a dream or otherwise he couldn't tell. First he saw all his precious manga ablaze, then a voice said:

"See, your medicines are burnt: now you alone remain to be burnt in like manner. Is your heart still with them?"

Early Sunday morning found him bringing in his nets and fish, but his thoughts were with his manga, and he hurriedly climbed the steep cliff to get back and see if really they were burnt. Passing through Luanza and starting up the hill there came a message to his heart:

"Return, O Musokantanda, return, that thou mayest believe!"

He obeyed, and returning went into the gospel service just beginning.

I need not tell of the silent prayers ascending from the surprised Christians for the notorious devil-doctor in the audience. One vivid electrifying flash did it all. He saw Christ dying for HIM. Springing to his feet and raising his hands to heaven he exclaimed: "O Saviour mine, I believe!"

However, as the service continued great fears beset him. "But my manga, I dare not expose it, lest it requite me and I die!" Then he consoled himself, "Well, the great thing is I am a believer now, so what does it matter if I still keep it?"

But God said: "O foolish one, wouldst thou let two antagonistic forces drag thee in opposite directions? Know Christ only!"

Silently he beseeched for power to withstand the evil influences striving against him, demanding the concealment of their arts, and God in heaven heard the cry of his newborn babe. He sent a loving man home with him, who talked in glowing terms of his new possessions, of joy and peace and life eternal, but never a suggestion of the dread manga in his hut.

'Twas the word fitly spoken. Could he longer fear? No! Out came two covered baskets containing his diabolical decoctions and fetishes of great local value. Let the frenzied powers try their worst! Had not God already shown him in the vision of the night how best to rid himself of his witchcraft wealth?

Hearing a noise in the village, out we hurried to see a strange open air meeting. A dense crowd agog with excitement, and a blazing fire in the center of the ring! Then a lane forming in the throng,—people shrinking back in abject fear as the "borderland professional" approached,—fear lest the contents of the baskets he carried would in passing cast their evil spell upon them! Picture him standing there beside the fire, erect with solemn face, realizing as we never could the break he is mak-

ing with the powers of the nether world and the domination of lying spirits, calling upon the fire to devour the old treasures of his craft as he throws them in one by one. See, there goes a wizard's horn packed full of nameless accessories! Now the claws of the lion which killed so many of their tribe, and worth a chief's ransom to his profession! Now to the flames the powdered frontal bones of powerful enemies, a potent drug of marvelous life-sustaining property! Now the deadly bululu of the crocodile, responsible for many a mysterious death! All the while his running commentary is full of rejoicing relief that God has saved him out of the devil's priesthood. Look, there go the teeth of the poisonous mamba: an infallible snake-charm this! Now the misansankuva, that can protect the wearer from lightning! Deeply rooted is the belief that this is a dragon that ranges the heavens with eyes of fire, and descends only to kill. Now into the fire he tosses a certain eagle's claws which if worn round the sufferer's neck will cure him of the death-giving disease caused by its passing cry of "Ko! ko!" overhead. See, now there go tiny portions of the mazombwe, a rare weird insect of priceless magic! Now more horns with their odious contents, now the amulets, and so on, and so on! Meanwhile he is earnestly exhorting the crowd to escape the other devouring fire which menaces all lovers of evil.

Thus did this brave man, not two hours old in the faith, sever himself from the devil's service, sacrificing his affluent living for Christ in a real apostolic blaze!

Such desecration of their medicines stirred up all the doctors of the district, who swore to take his life with the fetishes he had disowned. Confounded was the whole countryside when no ill befell him.

Months passed. Then his special call came. It was the Macedonian cry for help from the lips of his beloved Konga Vantu (Dan Crawford's native name,) for a volunteer for a far off district, lacking a single teacher of the truth. His heart responded immediately. Off he went. This meant the rugging up by the roots all his local interests and Christian ties, the leaving of his house, his flourishing manioc fields, his fishing industry,—indeed his precious ALL,—to live among strangers that he might tell them of Jesus and his love.

> We thank thee, O Lord, for all who have chosen poverty or solitude for thy sake, for all men of prayer, for all saints in common life who have endured suffering for noble ends, and for all who have turned pain to patience of character and purity of life in the strength of him who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, even Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

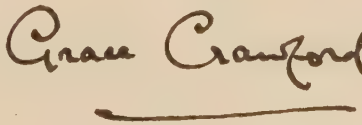
And has he regretted this second sacrifice? Could you but see his radiant face you would get your answer as he tells of the little Bible-school built, and of the services conducted therein, and of all the children who are learning to read God's Word in their own tongue, and oh! joy beyond words, the salvation of the first four men and one woman! And listen too as he turns at the door and with earnest entreaty begs for your prayers in the white man's land, that the chiefs may subject themselves to the Lord, and that abundance of strength may be granted him to work unceasingly for his Master!

Don't fail him! The precious time for intercessory prayer will soon be over, so too the opportunity for the helping hand. The night is darkening on to the climax. THEN the bright Dawn, with the rewards for faithfulness!

But now, O now for the tribes yet untouched, whose hearts are the dwelling-places of the blackest darkness! Alas, they spend their lives with their backs to God, deluded by their devil-doctors and hugging their fetishes, knowing naught of a Saviour's redeeming love!

Can the church of Christ let them remain so? Did not our Lord die for them also? Can any sacrifice on our part be too great to send the glad news to them while yet we may?

Yours in the one great cause of him we love,



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We all have to be our own center, but we are not obliged to be our own circumference. —Dean Inge.

# John Bunyan: The Pilgrim of Progress.


## P. Whitwell Wilson.

**Author and Publicist, New York City.**


Through three long centuries of change, time, like an ever-rolling stream, has swept an uneasy world since there was born a boy whose name was to become a symbol of the unconquerable soul of man. Still in the ancient abbey church of Elstow, an obscure but picturesque village near Bedford in England, you may see the registers wherein is inscribed the spelling, "John Bonnionn."

The genius of Bunyan is nowhere disputed. On his literary art and exquisite imagination Macaulay lavished his richest rhetoric. At the invitation of Morley, the historian, James Anthony Froude thought it worth his while to write Bunyan's life. Even Dr. Johnson, though a Tory and a churchman, surrendered to the spell. On one well-remembered occasion he took the little daughter of a bishop on his knee, but finding that she had not read the "Pilgrim's Progress" set her down again with the rebuke:

"Then I would not give a farthing for you!"

So also has it been with the common people. They too have read their Bunyan gladly. The "Pilgrim's Progress" has been translated into 122 languages. As Andrew Lang put it:

"Bunyan is everybody's author. The very Catholics have their own edition of the 'Pilgrim.' They have cut out Giant Pope, but have been too good-natured to insert Giant Protestant in his place."

### A Genius by Rebirth.

To say that Bunyan is a genius, though it be true, is not enough. There is the further question whence that genius was derived.

Of a genius it is usually held that he was thus born. As a mere lad Mozart was a musician, Pope was a poet, Giotto was an artist, but in John Bunyan's boyhood there was not a suggestion of the greatness to which in later years he was to attain. About him there was nothing that aroused the notice of the neighbors, no anecdote, no legend, and if he had died at the age of twenty-five or even thirty years God alone would have remembered who he was.

John Bunyan was not a genius by birth. He was a genius by rebirth. In his own words, he owed his life to "grace abounding." It was "grace abounding" that transformed what the novelist of our day would have called a Babbitt of Bedford and made him what he became.

About his pedigree there has been much discussion. He himself describes it as "a low and inconsiderable generation," adding, "My father's house being of that rank that is meanest and most despised of all the families in the land." Precisely why the village blacksmith should have been so honored an artisan while the whitesmith, whose trade it was to make and mend the pots and pans, lived on a lower social scale, is a mystery of English caste. The fact for us is that the Bunyans,—grandfather, father, son,—were merely tinkers, and that tinkering was John Bunyan's craft. Near Elstow had been born that early English satirist, George Gascoigne, who in a poem declared that priests might cease to pray when tinkers make no more holes than they found.

Bunyan's successor in the pulpit at Bedford, Dr. John Brown, thinks that his an-

cestors may have come over from Normandy with William the Conqueror, and assuredly he gives evidence. On the other hand, a more imaginative conjecture has been, not that the Bunyans were a family whose fortunes had declined, but that they were gypsies who had abandoned the tent for the cottage. James Simson, a student of Romany records, takes this view. It seems to us to be pure conjecture.

From Bunyan's countenance we can draw no definite conclusion. The fact that on one occasion he asked himself whether there might not be Jewish blood in his veins is, perhaps, more significant. A man who knew himself to be a gypsy might wonder whether he had in him also a strain of the Hebrew.

The point for us surely is that by the usual standards of the time the family of John Bunyan was respectable, that there was a little property at Bunyan End, as it was called, which could be bequeathed by will, and that near it there happened to be a marsh, which doubtless suggested to the mind of Bunyan the parable of the Slough of Despond.

*Christian at Mount Sinai.*

### The Sense of Sin and of God.

To John Bunyan respectability was no satisfaction of the conscience. In the City of Destruction he could not dwell at ease. To stand well with men left him standing ill with God. In a word, he suffered from sin. Like St. Paul he described himself as "the chief of sinners," and he meant it. "I was," he declares, "the very ringleader of all the youth that kept me company, in all manner of vice and ungodliness."

Hence there has arisen what we can only consider to be the legend that John Bunyan was the desperate character of the neighborhood. It is true that he indulged in oaths, even on Sunday, which was assuredly a fault. But we also find him blaming himself for a game of cat, which was no more harmful than tennis or golf. The truth about him is not that he was a reprobate by the ordinary standards of society. On the contrary, when as a preacher he was accused of witchcraft, of Jesuitry, and of keeping two wives, he indignantly protested that never in his life had he been even remotely unfaithful to his marriage, and that he avoided touching so much as the hand of women whom he met. What Bunyan heard was a call that transcended the rules of conduct, however strict. The sin that he dreaded was not alone a sin against morals, but a sin against the Holy Ghost.

Everywhere the sense of the presence of God pursued him. If he fell into the sea and was nearly drowned, if he fell out of a boat into the river and was yet preserved,

if he struck an adder in the road with his stick and recklessly pulled out its fangs with his fingers, it was to the mercy of God that he owed his forfeited life. He did not welcome eternity as he welcomed it later. Eternity was a fate that he dreaded. "Yea," wrote he, "I was also then so overcome with despair of life and heaven that I should often wish either that there had been no hell, or that I had been a devil."

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES ALLEGORIZED.

At the age of sixteen years he lost his mother, and at that age he was plunged headlong into the Civil War. On which side he fought is a question that no one can decide. Like other Eastern counties Bedfordshire was for the Parliament and against the king. What matters to us is the use as allegory to which Bunyan put his experiences in the field. Greatheart, Captain Boanerges and Captain Credence were officers in the armies of the Lord of hosts. Mansoul was a fortified city with walls, gates, a garrison and besiegers. Christian himself was equipped with sword, shield and helmet, and with armor that offered him no protection if he turned his back on the enemy.

During his service as a soldier Bunyan had yet another narrow escape. He was summoned to stand as sentinel, but a comrade took his place and was shot through the head, another hint that his life was not his own.

Those were days when Oliver Cromwell himself, though a Puritan, was a brewer. With ale and the alehouse Bunyan was familiar, and of one terrible scene he was eye-witness. An innkeeper had a half-witted son who amused people greatly by cursing his father, nor was any laughter louder than the merriment of the innkeeper himself. One day the innkeeper was torn by demoniac paroxysms. To drive out the devil the neighbors bound him to a bench and applied a pan of coals to his mouth. In the smoke the devil was supposed to escape, but the innkeeper again fell into his fits until he died. The spiritual epilepsy which debilitated Giant Despair, like other details of his "dream," was founded by John Bunyan on the real life of which he had been witness.

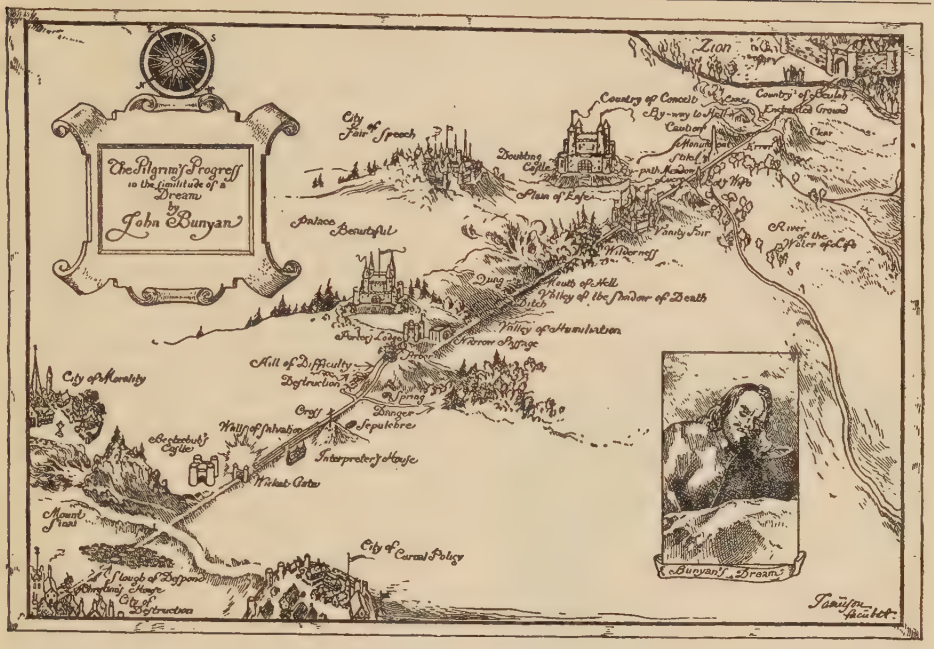
At the early age of about 21 years Bunyan married an orphan girl, as poor as himself. Of this woman we do not know so much as the name. But her father, wrote Bunyan, "was counted godly." Not since the captive maiden directed Naaman the Syrian to the prophet Elisha has there been recorded a witness more valuable to the cause of God among men than the testimony, anonymous but unforgetable, of John Bunyan's young bride. They had not "so much household stuff as a dish or spoon" between them. Yet, when books were costly, her dowry included two of them, which her father had left her when he died. They were entitled "The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven" and "The Practice of Piety," and those books were the true beginning of what was to be Bunyan's own pilgrimage. Life as a path to a goal,—that became his idea of piety.

Not that the wife depended only on her books. She remembered also the example of her father, "how he would reprove and correct vice, both in his house and amongst his neighbors; what a strict and holy life he lived in his day, both in word and deed." Bunyan never saw that father-in-law except in his dream. Of Evangelist, who warned Christian to flee from the wrath to come, and of Goodwill, who drew Christian hastily through the wicket gate whence started the narrow way to the cross, this Unknown Soldier of Christ was the prototype.

Reading these books Bunyan got religion. Not only did he go to church, but at church he became a ritualist. "I was," he tells us, "so overrun with the spirit of superstition that I adored, and that with great devotion, even all things (both the high place, priest, clerk, vestment, service, and what else,) belonging to the church."

For a time he dwelt in what later he was to call the Town of Morality. For instance, he gave up dancing, though only after a struggle. The voice within him cried, "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?" His instructor was Mr. Legality, and awful was the overhanging rock of Mount Sinai, flaming with wrath and rumbling with thunder.

It would not be easy to mention a pastime more innocent than ringing of the bells in the steeple of the church at Elstow, yet Bunyan, when so employing his energies, would ask himself, "How if a bell should fall on me? How if the steeple itself should




collapse?" Merely conforming to the externals of religion was not enough.

### A Palace Beautiful.

One day he happened to overhear the gossip of three or four poor women, also nameless to us, who were sitting in the sun as it shone on the streets of Bedford. They were women who had enjoyed not one of what we should call the advantages of education. Their life was hard and simple. But their conversation was sublime. What they were discussing was the glory of the New Birth, the renaissance not of manners, not of art, not of learning, but of man himself, the very soul of him, what for good or ill lives on forever. For the moment those doorsteps were transformed into a Palace Beautiful, where the hostesses of the Pilgrim were Discretion, Prudence, Piety and Charity.

Of our Saviour in his fulness there are many aspects. In these days, as it seems sometimes, men see in him no more than a friend of friends, a social worker among the sick and the poor, a teacher of duty to neighbors. To John Bunyan the love of Christ was more deeply revealed than this. It was the death of Christ that released his heart's blood. It was not in Galilee, not at Bethlehem, but on Calvary that there was wrought the redemption of mankind.

In Bunyan we see, therefore, what we submit to be the true use of the Scriptures. A charge against him was that by insisting on literal inspiration he had put himself into the company of papists, who, it was said by the magistrate, also held that belief. Bunyan answered that he and his friends knew when the Bible was helpful to them in the literal sense and when it furnished a parable or symbol of truth. He stood, then, for the whole Bible,—patriarchs, prophets, psalmists, apostles and evangelists. But amid this incomparable miscellany of revelation Bunyan saw the supreme issue, clear, distinct and explaining everything else. "My sin," he wrote, "was point-blank against my Saviour." It was not a breach of regulations merely. It was a repudiation and a neglect of utter love, poured forth on him by a dying God.

Hence, Bunyan did not believe in the idea that any way into any church is as good as any other way. The Pilgrim in his Progress met many fellow travelers. Faithful and Hopeful were men whose consecration was genuine. They had obeyed the Lord. But shallow professors, like Talkative, who were full of mere words about religion, did not stand the test. Formalist and Hypocrisy might climb over the walls into the highway of Salvation, so avoiding the strait gate, but

at the Hill Difficulty they turned aside, the one to the right and the other to the left, and were heard of no more.

These are stern estimates of what is permanent in human thought and action, but it is the simple fact that out of all the religious ferment of Bunyan's period his direct approach to Christ himself stands out as the one event which cannot be questioned or gainsaid. He took the long view. Indeed, he knew of no life that was not eternal life.

That he was soundly converted goes without saying. But in no man do we see more clearly than in Bunyan how much is meant by that word conversion. It was not only a casual step over a line. It was not only a shake of the hand. It was not in any sense a trick of the mind. It was an awful and a prolonged settlement of the claims of God on his rebellious child. In the "Pilgrim's Progress" there was a long march before Christian, having left the City of Destruction, arrived at the cross and felt that his burden had rolled away into an empty sepulcher. So was it in Bunyan's own life. He devoted years to wrestling with his sense of guilt. It was thus step by step that Christ entered into his heart and drove out the dread of retribution by demonstrating that love is greater than evil.

It will be seen that all Bunyan's "Interpreters," as he would have called them, were common people, wholly unordained to any ministry, occupying no pulpit, some of them women and some of them men, yet all—each unknown to the other,—working together for this man's good. To Bunyan, therefore, every Christian was ipso facto a disciple who is taught and an apostle who is sent.

He became inevitably a local preacher. Those were days before the Sunday school, but in our language his meetings around Bedford might have been described as Bible classes. To hand on the gift of Christ which he had himself received became his very life.

### Imprisonments.

In the year 1660 King Charles II returned to his throne. Europe was still devastated by a Thirty Years' War, fought largely over religion, and in Britain religion had been an important element in the Cromwellian struggle. Dissenters, therefore, were treated as dangerous fanatics, whose gatherings must be prevented by the police. People must attend the one church, by law established, and must pray by the one service book. It was an edict that fell at once on John Bunyan. The suspicion that his followers were armed, and that they intended to foment civil disorder, proved to be ridiculous. But in a technical sense his meetings were held to be a sedition against the crown.

It is evident that the magistrates acted against him with extreme reluctance: indeed, that some of his imprisonment was merely nominal. But the fact remains that for two periods, each of six years, and for a third period of six months, John Bunyan was an occupant of a jail, that he was condemned to exile, and to hanging if he returned to the country.

In strict law he was thus liable to the death penalty. But of course no such judicial assassination was seriously contemplated. The fact is that Bunyan, as a prisoner, was as precise as he had become in his preaching. He could not evade an issue. Even a formula suggested in kindness by his judges was rejected by him, and it is quite true that in this sense he compelled the courts to condemn him. In his disinclination to compromise he followed the heroism of Peter and John. As he said plainly, if he were released one day he would be preaching the gospel the next.

The proceedings against him, though so reluctantly pressed by the authorities, shattered Bunyan's faith in what has since come to be called British justice. He saw a great nation, and indeed the whole world, as one vast Vanity Fair, nor can anyone deny that viewed spiritually the world deserves this terrible characterization. One hundred and fifty years later Thackeray saw England reflected still in Bunyan's ineradicable phrase, and no one seriously contemplating the United States, including the statistics of matrimony, of suicide, and of crime, can without insincerity assert that this country is immune from Bunyan's verdict.

The law as administered in the reigns of Kings Charles II and James II was to John Bunyan a travesty of justice. Lord Hategood was judge. Envy, Superstition and Pickthank were witnesses. Lèse-majesté had been committed against Prince Beelzebub and his friends, Lord Luxurious, Sir Having Greedy, and others. And the jury

included Mr. Love-Lust, Mr. Live-Loose, and Mr. Liar. Daniel Defoe himself and Dean Swift never surpassed this terrific sarcasm.

We take it that there were three jails at Bedford. One was for the county, another was for the town, and a third was the little dungeon on the bridge over the river. It is this last which, as long as it existed, was assigned by tradition to John Bunyan, and here, in his third and final incarceration, he wrote—so it was said,—the "Pilgrim's Progress." It was "a certain place where was a den." Indeed, when the dungeon was abolished a ring was found engraved "J. B."

Historical opinion has doubted this romantic supposition. The assumption is that Bunyan was confined in a more commodious prison, that he was visited by and even preached therein to his friends, and that he was not illtreated. Nothing, however, will alter the fact that for the sake of his faith he left his home, his four children,—of whom one favorite daughter was blind,—and their step-mother, whom he had married not long before. The shock to her in her pregnancy nearly cost her life itself, and her baby succumbed. Make every deduction from the severities of the law, and there remains a substantial residuum of genuine martyrdom for John Bunyan!

It is ungenerous to minimize his misfortunes. The true way to put it is that in his misfortunes he was fortunate. The very intensity of John Bunyan's zeal had its dangers. Like all the Puritans he was inclined to mere dispute. He had a fling at the Quakers, whom he compared with "the ranters," only,—as he put it,—they had "a new gloss upon them." If he was called a Baptist it was with reservations, for three of his children were baptized as infants. Indeed, it seemed as if in the entanglements of controversy the simplicity of his witness would be confused. While threescore books taught him the feel of the pen, it was not such argument that the world then needed. It was vision. Above all, it was vision of our Lord himself.

### Vision in Solitude.

"Be still," sang the psalmist, "and know that I am God!" For John Bunyan the jail became a defence against the world. Acting according to his conscience, not his desires, he shared the seclusion in which Thomas à Kempis wrote "The Imitation of Christ," Fra Angelico painted the loveliest primitives of the pre-Raphaelite period, and Frances Ridley Havergal composed the most triumphant hymns of the Victorian evangelists. In prison John Bunyan learned how to write, what to write, and what to leave unwritten.

It is said of Beethoven that as deafness closed his ears the nobler became his music. So was it with Bunyan. He had attended

*Christian loses his burden at the cross.*
*(Cruikshank.)*

neither college nor university. As he tells us, he was innocent whether of Plato or of Aristotle. But the very limitation of his reading was his advantage. His ear was attuned to no discords of language, but only to the majestic harmonies of the Scriptures, translated by the order of King James I. The only English that he knew was the most exquisite English ever committed to paper. It was as his mother tongue that he spoke it and wrote it, not a word misplaced, scarcely a word repeated, and whole paragraphs containing no word of more than two syllables.

If we ignore altogether the spiritual values involved, his knowledge of the Bible is a triumphant vindication of that literature as a school of all great literature.

In a passage which might be quoted, perhaps, at length, James Anthony Froude declares that the "Pilgrim's Progress" "was composed exactly at the time when it was possible for such a book to come into being,—the close of the period when the Puritan formula was a real belief, and was about to change from a living principle into an intellectual opinion." Says he:

"So long as a religion is fully alive men do not talk about it, or make allegories about it."

In other words, we are to regard the "Pilgrim's Progress"—so thought Froude,—as the swansong of the gospel.

Let us admit that Puritanism was hardening into 18th century rationalism: that the beatific vision of John Bunyan, like the beatific vision of St. John the divine, preceded a dark age. What Froude failed—in this passage, at any rate,—to indicate was the imminence of a resurrection. Puritanism had been great, but Christ was greater than Puritanism. The "Pilgrim's Progress" did not end at the river of death, nor even at the golden gates. There was a sequel. Along the narrow way Pilgrim was followed by his family and his friends. The prisoner of Bedford revealed the Christ to the great company of Methodists, of evangelicals, of Salvationists, of missionaries, the wide world over. It was no swansong of the past. It was a trumpet call to future triumph!

### Permanent Principles.

What Bunyan illuminated was not a fading illusion. It was inevitable and absolute truth, that man is a child of God who has wandered from his rightful home; that in a far country the image of God in man has been defaced; that man, despite his fall from goodness, continues to be a being morally responsible to the Almighty for his thoughts, his words and his deeds; that he is therefore a sinner in need of salvation; that Jesus Christ came into this world to save man from sin, and in love suffered to the uttermost, the just for the unjust, to bring man to God; and that in Christ man, redeemed from guilt, may live a new life by a grace not his own, but a gift of that Spirit who also is in the Godhead.

These are not views, not opinions, not attitudes. They are principles declared in Scripture, defined in the annals of the church, and proved by experience. They are principles which John Bunyan explained—we dare not say, ennobled,—by what in effect is an autobiography, his life written into the Bible and the Bible written into his life.

He died not at Bedford, but in London. His grave in Bunhill Fields is today surrounded by a seething metropolis, and the very soil has risen around it. We have automobiles. We have the radio. We have education. We have athletics. We have music. We have dancing. We have steamships. We have skyscrapers. We have hospitals. We have machinery. We have electric light. And we have psychoanalysis. So be it! We have also sin. We need also to be saved from sin. Nor is there salvation from sin except it be in the sacrifice of a redeemer, who was God, who was man, who was love. That is the life-giving epitaph of John Bunyan. His is a progress that never ends!

## The Romance of a Great Book.

### "Pilgrim's Progress" in Many Lands and Languages.

"Pilgrim's Progress" is easily the world's second best-seller. Great agencies in this country and England that distribute Christian literature, such as the Religious Tract Society of London, find it the most usable and popular steady book next to the Bible. Its simple style has rendered it capable of ready translation, so that it can be understood in all parts of the globe, and there is a fascinating list of 122 languages into which the book has been translated during the past hundred years. This number increases with every year. The story of the spread of a book second only in value to the Holy Scriptures themselves from country to country and from one race to another is a proof of its wonderful virility and attractive power.

Just as many of the names of characters and places in this book have found their way into everyday English, and are often heard on the lips of those who have forgotten their origin, so in the languages of non-Christian countries, from the backward tribes of the Congo to the cultured students of China, characters and incidents are rapidly becoming current coin.

We know what we mean when we speak of "Vanity Fair" or "Giant Despair," but so does the native of Fiji or the Gilbert Islander, and so also does the Christian Dyak, who, having retired from the head-hunting business, reads his "Palisang Oloh Kristen" with the best of us.

Mrs. A. B. Fisher, a missionary of Uganda, once told the following story:

"One day during one of those long itinerating tours we had to pass along a terrible road over miles of swamp. The only way to traverse these swamps is to be carried on the shoulders of native bearers, with your feet well out. After some time in this most uncomfortable position, with my back nearly breaking, I told my bearers to put me down as I could not hold on any longer. Happily there was a tree trunk close handy, and they deposited me safely upon this, and I was able to rest for a time. Mr. Fisher, however was less fortunate. He was being carried on the shoulders of his bearers, when one slipped, with the result that my husband took a header into the mud. One of the natives who had been carrying me turned round and said, 'Oh, mistress, poor "Bani" is like Christian in the Slough of Despond!' I only give you this instance to show how the people are assimilating the teaching of 'Pilgrim's Progress.' The volume is their faithful friend."

Some of these languages must have taxed the skill of the printer, notably that of the Eskimo, for which a special font of type had to be cast. The trouble was that there were not enough K's to go round.

It is not difficult to recognize the book under its Portuguese title of "O Peregrino," or "En Pilligrims Bandring," Danish. But disguised as "Ny Fandehana' Ny Mpirahiny," we might take some time to discover our old friend in its Malagasy dress, while "Mongo Mo Modali-Mo-Mondo" (Ngombe) would completely baffle us.

No important language is missing. Even the Cree Indians of Moosonee—a humble

*Hypocrisy, in "Pilgrim's Progress."*

tribe,—have their own "Pilgrim's Progress" in a script that looks like a proposition from Euclid or a stenographic nightmare.

But if there are strange-looking languages, there are stranger-looking illustrations. It might give us a shock to see the Japanese Pilgrim dressed as a warrior of the Samurai type, long sword and chain armor all complete, or to turn to the end of the book (which apparently is the beginning of it,) and see what looks like a bit of a willow-pattern plate, but which is actually the "Pilgrim crossing the river on his way to the Celestial City." Today, however, the Japanese gentleman can walk down Ginza, the leading business street in Tokyo, and buy as easily—but not so cheaply,—as he buys his evening paper a de luxe edition of Bunyan in Morocco binding, with the beautiful and well-known illustrations of Harold Copping.

There are thousands of folk in obscure corners of the earth who will never meet an Englishman in this life, but in the next there will be one Englishman whom they will all greet as an old friend and companion,—John Bunyan, the tinker of Bedford.

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Mercy, pity, peace and love are the four cardinal virtues.—William Blake.

# A Bible Study of Prayer.

Delavan L. Pierson.

1. Reasons for Prayer.

1. God's invitation and command—Luke 18. 1; Ephesians 6. 18; Philippians 4. 6; Colossians 4. 3; 1 Timothy 2. 1.

2. Promise of answer—Exodus 22. 27; Deuteronomy 4. 29; Psalm 50. 15; 145. 18, 19; Isaiah 65. 24; Matthew 7. 7; 21. 22; John 16. 24; Ephesians 3. 20.

3. Example of men of God—Abraham, Genesis 15; Moses, Exodus 14. 15, 16; Numbers 21. 7; David, Psalms 3, 43; 1 Samuel 23. 10, 12; Solomon, 1 Kings 3. 1-13; Elijah, 1 Kings 18. 41-45; James 5. 17; Elisha, 2 Kings 4. 33; 6. 18, 20; Isaiah, 2 Chronicles 32. 20; Jeremiah, 32. 16-21; Daniel, 2. 17, 18; 9. 3, 4, 20, 21; Paul and Silas, Acts 16. 25.

4. Example of Christ—Mark 1. 35; Matthew 14. 23; Luke 6. 12, etc.

5. Answered prayers—Abraham, Genesis 15; Jacob, Genesis 32; Moses, Exodus 14. 15, 16; Gideon, Judges 6. 36-40; David, 1 Samuel 23. 10-12; Daniel, 9. 20, 23; Cornelius, Acts 10. 4; Peter, Acts 9. 40; the church, Acts 12. 5-12; Paul, Acts 28. 8.

2. Reasons for Unanswered Prayer.

1. Iniquity in the heart—Psalm 34. 15; 66. 18.

2. Disobedience—Proverbs 28. 9.

3. Asking amiss—James 4. 2, 3.

4. Lack of faith—James 1. 6.

3. When and Where to Pray.

1. Morning, noon and night—Psalm 55. 16, 17; Daniel 6. 10.

2. At all times—Luke 18. 1; Ephesians 6. 18; 1 Thessalonians 5. 17; Romans 12. 12.

3. Christ's custom—Mark 1. 35; Luke 6. 12.

4. In the Temple—Mark 11. 17.

5. Upper room—Acts 1. 13; closet, Matthew 6. 6.

6. Out of doors—Luke 23. 39; Acts 10. 9; 16. 13.

7. Everywhere—1 Timothy 2. 8.

4. Postures in Prayer.

1. Standing—1 Samuel 1. 26; 1 Kings 8. 22; Luke 18. 11, 13.

2. Spreading hands—Ezra 9. 5; 1 Timothy 2. 8.

3. Kneeling—1 Kings 8. 54; Psalm 95. 6; Luke 22. 41; Acts 9. 40; 20. 36; Ephesians 3. 14; Philippians 2. 10.

4. Bowing on face—Genesis 24. 26; Exodus 4. 31; Joshua 5. 14; 7. 6; Matthew 26. 39; Revelation 11. 16.

5. Accompaniments to Prayer.

1. Thanksgiving—Philippians 4. 6.

2. Adoration, worship—Matthew 6. 9.

3. Confession—Psalm 51; Daniel 9. 5; 1 John 1. 9.

4. Watching—Mark 13. 33; 14. 38; Colossians 4. 2.

5. Fasting—Matthew 17. 21.

6. Characteristics of True Prayer.

1. Faith in God—Matthew 21. 22; Mark 11. 24; Hebrews 10. 22; 1 John 5. 13-15.

2. Obedience—James 5. 16; 1 John 3. 22; Psalm 37. 4, 5.

3. Sincerity and earnestness—Psalm 145. 18, 19; Luke 18. 1; Colossians 4. 2; 1 Thessalonians 5. 17; Hebrews 10. 22; James 5. 13.

4. Forgiving spirit—Matthew 11. 25.

5. Humility—2 Chronicles 7. 14; Psalm 10. 17; Luke 18. 13, 14.

6. United agreement—Matthew 18. 19, 20; 2 Corinthians 1. 11; 1 John 3. 22.

7. In the Spirit, in the name of Christ, according to the will of God—John 14. 13, 14; 15. 7, 17; 1 John 5. 13-15; Romans 8. 26; Ephesians 2. 18; 6. 18; Jude 20.

7. For Whom and for What to Pray.

1. For those in authority—1 Timothy 2. 2.

2. Enemies—Luke 6. 28.

3. Saints—Ephesians 6. 18.

4. Laborers for God—Matthew 9. 38; Romans 15. 30; 2 Corinthians 1. 11.

5. All men—1 Timothy 2. 1.

6. For mercy and forgiveness—Luke 18. 13, 14, 17; Acts 8. 22; 1 John 5. 16.

7. Healing and deliverance—James 5. 15, 16; 3 John 2; Romans 1. 10.

8. Wisdom and the Holy Spirit—Luke 11. 13; Ephesians 1. 16-23; James 1. 5.

9. Souls—James 5. 16; 1 John 5. 16.

10. Kingdom of God—Matthew 6. 10; Colossians 4. 2, 3; 2 Thessalonians 3. 1.

8. Great Prayers in the Bible.

Abraham—Genesis 18. 23-32.

Moses—Exodus 32. 11-14, 31-35; 33. 12-23.

David—1 Chronicles 29. 10-19; Psalms 4, 17 and 51.

Solomon—2 Chronicles 6. 12-42.

Daniel—9. 1-23.

Nehemiah—1. 4-11.

Model prayer for disciples—Matthew 6. 9-15.

Christ's prayer in the Garden—John 17.

Apostles' prayer in persecution—Acts 4. 23-31.

Apostle Paul—Ephesians 1. 12-23; 3. 14-21; Philippians 1. 3-11; Colossians 1. 3-18.

# Foundation Stones, and the Chief Cornerstone—I.

## Miss Grace H. Hamilton of Baltimore, Md.

*Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a tried stone, a precious cornerstone of sure foundation: he that believeth shall not be in haste. Isaiah 28. 16.*

Whatever form or fashion religion may assume through the changing years, we demand of it certain eternal values. It must have stability, it must have harmony, it must be true, and it must be workable. It must also be imperishable. (Psalm 62. 2; Ephesians 2. 13; John 14. 6; 8. 32; Psalm 90; Hebrews 7. 24; Matthew 7. 24, 25.) Isaiah has given a glimpse of big things in the verse quoted, the permanent and the precious, and the necessity for time to test the values,—"he that believeth shall not be in haste."

What contributions of thought along the lines of stability, of truth, of harmony and use have we in these old prophets? How can we apply these contributions to our daily living? How can we find the standards that will help clarify our vision? What foundation stones in the old building are still usable and necessary?

Before we consider them we must push them into the background of our thought and place ourselves in the stream of history, so that we may with clearer eyes see the relative values of the truths we find on the pages of this Book, old, yet ever new.

In order to do this let us study four necessary things: the historical background, the kind of men who wrote the books, essential values of the writings, and the application to life.

In the brief studies which follow of the four prophets, Isaiah, Hosea, Amos and Micah, we note first of all that they lived during the same period. As we read the opening words of these prophets we recall the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah of Judah, and that of Jeroboam II to distinguish him from the first king in Israel, Jeroboam the son of Nebat. From the middle of the 8th century B. C. through a period of at least 70 years these four contemporaries were leaders of thought in the palaces, the cities, and the country towns of Palestine.

We must know something of the historical and political situation of these two kingdoms, and we must at least attempt to find a distinguishing trait for the five kings under whose reigns these prophets lived.

### Historical Background.

It was the fifth dynasty in Israel. Jeroboam II, reigning for 41 years, is characterized always by an outstanding phrase: "He departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin" (2 Kings 14. 23, 24). There is no originality in sin, and Jeroboam II was not an exception to the rule. Weak, cruel and perverted, the height of his ambition seemed to be to imitate the ruler whose name he bore.

The king in Judah contemporary with Jeroboam for the last 14 years of his life was Uzziah (2 Kings 14. 8-12). There had been civil war between the two countries, and Judah had lost. The gold and silver of Jerusalem's Temple, the kings' treasures, with hostages, had been taken to Samaria, and Uzziah's father had been slain by conspirators.

Uzziah at the age of 16 was placed upon Judah's throne, where he reigned for 52 years (2 Kings 15. 1-7). He must have had wise advisers, and we know that a valiant priest lived in his day. Uzziah was a builder and a farmer, a patron of military inventions, and commander-in-chief of an army of 307,000; "but when he was strong

his heart was lifted up," and in his pride his religious ambition gained mastery over his commonsense. During his reign there was war with Philistia. His declining years were spent as a victim of the terrible disease of leprosy.

Uzziah's son Jotham served his apprenticeship as king during his father's period of isolation, and reigned as actual king for 16 years (2 Kings 15. 5). It was a period of great prosperity for Judah. Cities were built, castles and towers erected. The country was rich under the heavy tribute money from the Ammonites, who had been subdued by Jotham. Prosperity and luxury abounded, the working classes had plenty to do, and the king "ordered his ways before Jehovah his God."

With complete abandonment of all the restraint which Jotham practised, his son Ahaz ascended the throne at 20 years of age, and reigned for 16 years over Judah (2 Kings 16). Dissipation, idolatry, cruelty, war with Israel, intrigue, alliance with Assyria, desecration and final ruin marked his career. The people of his realm forever placed him in the category of scoundrels by refusing a royal tomb at his death!

In his 25th year, Hezekiah, son of the idolatrous Ahaz, began his reign of 29 years over Judah, memorable for great events and great men. In 722 B. C. the neighboring tribes of Israel were taken captive by the Assyrians under Shalmanezer, and carried into exile. Hezekiah began his reforms in Judah, and one of the greatest Passover celebrations of Jewish history was held during his reign. In the 14th year of his reign the Assyrian host, encamped against Judah, was scattered.

### The Great Men.

As the leaders of men march across the pages of history we glean from the meager records a phrase of a contemporary which discloses their characters, and we sum up their achievements with a dismissal sigh of relief. Not so with the leaders of thought, the prophets, who have left so rich a heritage of words, from which we have to dig out their life records.

With Hezekiah we see Isaiah, and the king is lost in the shadow of the prophet, a prince of God who encouraged the king, healed him in his illness, and voiced the richest expressions of prophetic insight and inspired feeling that the human heart could utter. Isaiah, with his comprehensive vision, his statesmanship, his historic perspective, his marvelous gifts of imagination and sympathy, must have been a constant inspiration to Hezekiah, who "wrought that which was good and right and faithful before Jehovah his God" (2 Chronicles 31. 20, 21).

Standing with Isaiah we see Hosea, Amos, Micah;

Jeroboam II of Israel, weak, cruel, evil, allied with Assyria, war with Judah;

Uzziah of Judah, rich, proud, a patron of industry and invention, war with Philistia;

Jotham of Judah, orderly, law-abiding, industry and prosperity encouraged, war with Ammon;

Ahaz of Judah, dissolute, idolatrous, destructive, alliance with Assyria;

Hezekiah of Judah, faithful, aggressively good, besieged by Assyria.

### Isaiah's Vision.

With Isaiah as the leader of the prophet's group we catch the comprehensive vision of a man who thought deeply, lived sanely, and loved strongly. He analyzed conditions to find causes and give reasons for events, and on his deductions he based the prophetic hope which continues to astonish us with the beauty of its vision and the splendor of its ideal.

What were the existing conditions? What were the causes? How was he able to solve them, and to be of use and influence to his generation?

Jesus said: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled!" and "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!" We cannot read Isaiah without realizing two things: first, that he was hungering and thirsting after righteousness, not only for himself but for his country: therefore he was a true patriot. We also know of his vision of purity, and the cleansing power of that vision (Isaiah 6). This was his standard for himself and for the kingdom. He knew that peace could only come when these attainments of character were achieved. As we read the first six chapters of Isaiah we see that there is this constant plea, based on his love for the people, to return to God, to throw off the perverseness, the ceremonialism, the superstition, the admiration

and imitation of their pagan neighbors, the bribery and injustice of their leaders with their irresponsibility, the vanity and immorality of the women, and the superstition and knavery of the priests. Judah's sin was a heavy burden on his pure soul.

### Its Application.

Isaiah's first chapter gives us Judah's religious condition in a word we are apt to overlook: the word "backward" (4). The meaning of the word can best be understood by reading Romans 1. 18-32. In the midst of Isaiah's thought he suddenly unfurls the standard and gives the rallying call to a transforming manner of life. "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow! Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool!" Nothing emotional about this appeal, nothing impossible! It opens the door to sane and wholesome living. It calls for the perpetual realization of God, the spiritualization of everyday life. The foundations of society must be upheld, daily life made glorious by righting the wrongs, fighting the evils without, but only after the impurity within is cleansed.

"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." The "shall be" is answered for those who truly follow him who "was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, bore the chastisement of our peace, and with whose stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah's comprehensive vision of the splendor of God turns us to the incarnation, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!"

O love divine, how sweet thou art!
When shall I find my willing heart
All taken up by thee?
I thirst and faint and die to prove
The greatness of redeeming love,
The love of Christ to me!

(To be continued.)

## Aspects of Faith in Hebrews 11—I.

### Rev. James Reid of Eastbourne, England.

*Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Hebrews 11. 3.*

This is the first illustration which the writer to the Hebrews gives of the function and power of faith.

Faith is that by which we get into dynamic contact with the unseen world, like the chain by which the wheels of a car get into dynamic contact with the engine. It is the power by which man, who by his physical make-up belongs to the earth, gets into dynamic contact with the spiritual world, and is able to live in it. It is like the breathing apparatus by which a creature which grows in a pond begins to live in the air.

It is sound logic to put this illustration first. The first need of the soul of man is to be sure that he lives in a world which he can trust.

The late F. W. H. Myers was standing one day with friends before the Sphinx in Egypt, that figure looking out over the desert with inscrutable face. Someone said to him:

"If you were allowed to ask the Sphinx one question, and only one, with the assurance that it would be answered, what question would you ask?"

He answered: "If there was only one thing I were allowed to ask with the assurance that I would be told the answer, I would ask the Sphinx this, Tell me, is the universe friendly?"

That is the foundation of all real confidence in life. No one would live in a house with any peace of mind unless he had confidence that it would stand all weathers, and that its foundations were secure. The first need of our hearts, if we are going to meet life with any courage and gaiety of spirit, is to know that the universe in which we have our dwelling is sound at heart, that it is not our enemy, but our friend, and that

it is not finally against those hopes and affections and purposes of good to which our hearts encourage us to give ourselves.

This confidence is vital if we are going to have any heart for life. There may be plenty of people, and there are, to whom such questions do not seem to matter, who contrive to be happy enough and gay enough without troubling their heads about the basis of the world they live in. But that confidence is bought at a big price, the price of not thinking at all lest the fear of things should invade the heart; or the price of a cheery optimism which takes the place of faith and which may sooner or later break down and leave us floundering.

For real peace, the peace in which we can enjoy things and face things and take long views, we must have the security of knowing that what we plan or build at the bidding of our souls is not going to be swept away by a world which cares nothing for us, like a spider's web in a tempest.

The only thing which can give us this security is some assurance about the ground plan of the universe and the character of the builder. That is what faith achieves, and what faith alone achieves. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.

There are two points to note in this statement.

### The Assurance of Faith.

One is the assurance faith gives us: "We KNOW that the worlds were framed by the word of God."

It is the assurance that God is behind things, and that God the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the assurance that this world with all the wonder of created things, with all its suns and stars, day and night, seedtime and harvest, all the processes of nature and the life of plants and animals and men and women,—all this came out of the mind and heart and purpose of God, all this comes of the artistry of creative love.

That is what we want to know most of all. We want to know this for our life, for our peace of mind, for our hope in the face of pain and difficulty and the things that depress us on the upward way. And this is all we want to know. We do not need to know how he did it, except for scientific curiosity. So far as our souls are concerned, it does not matter. What matters is whether God is behind it all, whether it has been created by a loving purpose that is finally and forever on our side, or whether, as the sceptic in his own soul suggests, it all came out of nothing by a blind mechanism for which his life has no value, any more than a dead leaf has for the winds that drive along the dusty street.

It is on this fact that faith takes its stand, that the maker of heaven and earth is God, and that this God is one to whom we can look up, and say, "Father!"

### The Understanding of Faith.

The other thing to note is that it is by faith we know. By faith we understand, and there is no other way of knowing.

"By faith we understand." That is a big thing to say. Most of us would be inclined to put it this way, that by reason we understand, but by faith we accept in a blind credulity. But that is wrong. Reason is on the side of faith in this matter.

Take the position of the rationalist, who tells us that the world is the product of some blind mechanism without purpose and without heart! Can anyone who looks at the highest products of creation believe that? Can anyone believe that blind mechanism without a soul made Mozart's music, and wrote Shakspere's plays, and created the rose or the violet or the soul of Jesus?

That is as reasonable as to suggest that when you have described how Michael Angelo mixed his colors and laid them on the canvas you have explained the beauty that shines in his pictures, or when you have described the marble and the tools he used you have got to the bottom of his David. The idea is too incredible.

The truth is that it takes far too much faith, too much credulity, to become an unbeliever, and the miracles of unbelief are far more incredible than the miracles of faith.

Reason is on the side of faith, but it is by faith we understand. It is faith that opens the door to the big discoveries. It is faith that has the key to the riddle of the universe. It is faith that shows the value of goodness and love and beauty. It is faith that calls them divine. It is faith that has the courage to believe that the world is to be explained in its final secret by its best, and not by its worst. It is faith that sees

in a flower of the field and in the sacrifice of a lover and in the face of Jesus the touch of a divine personality. It is faith that looks up with gratitude and wonder from its exploration of the world and says:

"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth!"

Without faith that values and trusts the facts of his own inner experience, one cannot know the heart of the universe any more than one can know a friend without faith and trust. It is like going into the house of a man whom you do not know, when he is absent. The furniture, the pictures, the order and arrangement, will tell you many things about the owner if you look around patiently and with a receptive mind. But if there are little touches that speak of love, and you will not trust their message and let them speak to your heart, you will form an incomplete picture of the owner.

So it is with the world. There are many things in it that speak to our hearts of love, of goodness, of compassion. It is by these that we discern the face and heart of the Father. But we have to let them speak to our hearts, to trust them, before the door will open that lets us into this divine discovery. Without faith we can know nothing of what God is like.

Faith is an adventure. You say it is a leap in the dark. That is true, but it is a leap into which we are led by a light that shines within. And when we leap all kinds of things gather to back up this venture. The universe responds to this view of life, and to the kind of attitude to which it leads. It responds in peace and power and purity and illumination.

The world is a harp which gives up its full music only when it is struck by the hand of faith. Even those who have lost their faith that God is in all and behind all, working his purpose of love, cannot go on living a pure and unselfish life except by clinging to ideals which faith has created and kept alive. Those who begin by trusting their inward intuitions come at last to know.

### What Does Faith Do for Us?

For one thing, it means an outlook on the world around us in which we can find the true good of it, in which we can enter into its joy.

There are all sorts of wrong attitudes to

*Rev. James Reid of England.*

what we call nature, to that earthly, material universe which is the cradle of our souls. Some people fear it. Some people misuse it, and turn it to the uses of their passions or their pride or their selfishness. Some people turn from it as if it were something wicked or wrong.

There is no phrase that has been so wrongly misused and overdriven as that phrase of John's, "Love not the world!" He was not thinking of the material world at all, of all that is fair and beautiful and enjoyable. He was thinking of the ways of a society organized on the basis of unbelief, and all the rotten pleasure and vanity that it leads to. He was thinking of the values and ways and ideals of people who live only for the material. He never meant for a moment that we should not enter into all the enjoyment of the good of life, into the real enjoyment that comes of seeing and finding God in it.

There is a pleasure that can only be known by people who have faith, who know that this is the Father's world. There is a joy that is only known by the people who take life with its gifts from the hands of God.

The blight that poisons all true joy is the blight that comes from the irreverent, unbelieving heart. How many people are missing the true joy of a religious experience through nature because they do not realize that God is in everything that has no sin in it! His love streams out to us through

many windows. He is in the breath of the spring wind, in the scent of the hawthorn in the hedgerow, in the glint of the sun on a May morning.

That is where a stern Puritanism has often failed to reflect the splendor of religion.

Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith, in what I think is the best of her novels, describes a poor despairing soul who had come into religion through the sour, dark Calvinism of a narrow sect. He had committed a sin and had fallen into despair, thinking he was lost. He had always loved the Sussex landscape, but somehow he had never connected that with religion. Religion belonged to the dull chapel where he worshiped, and with the dismal doctrine of the wrath of God.

He was so miserable that one morning he went out to end his life in the farm pond, when suddenly the beauty of it all flamed up in his soul with the message that God loved him, and loved him through everything, making of every good gift which had no sin in it the channel of his fellowship.

By faith we truly enjoy. By faith we enter into the full treasure of beauty. By faith we reach the heart of every natural experience. By faith we know that the worlds were framed by the word of God.

Again, it is a call to loyalty.

There are things in the world which are difficult to square with any design of a loving God. Faith gives the best solution. Browning goes so far as to say that the love of God in Christ, accepted by the reason,—"solves for thee all questions in the earth, and out of it." That is true. But it is not an easy solution, or one which we can find merely by thinking things out. It is a practical solution, and the method of its application is by taking our stand on faith and holding on in sheer loyalty.

That is how Mr. Chesterton defines optimism. The true optimism is what he calls loyalty. It is holding on in the face of things we cannot understand, holding on as we would hold on to our belief in the character of a friend though there were some things we could not quite piece together.

Faith means holding on to the belief that God's plan is of love, that finally he rules, that the framework of the universe is fireproof, that the ground plan is sound, and that some day the things we have not been able to piece together shall find their niche in the completed whole.

If one were to take what may seem a trivial illustration, it is somewhat like working out a picture puzzle. There are some bits that do not seem to have much to do with the picture, or with any possible picture that can make either sense or beauty. But we know as we begin that all those shapeless pieces have their place in the final picture, and if we cannot find a place for them it is we who are at fault. If only we are patient enough and hold on, the time will come when we will find a use for them.

That is how we must look on pain and disappointment and the things that happen in nature that impel us to struggle and quicken us into compassion. They may not be the best that could have happened, but they are the best love could do when we think of what love is seeking to achieve through this creative strife, and when we think of the materials of human nature with which it has to work.

God took big risks when he made the world and when he created man and made him free. There was no other way love could take except this way of a long struggle and development. He was out for a perfection that could not have been won by any cut-and-dried creation that would have left no loophole for going wrong. And that risk is God's crucifixion.

But God's call to us is for the loyalty of faith, the faith that holds on and that believes that the boat is seaworthy and will get through, whatever storms may rise or whatever cross-currents may sweep her from her course.

There are moods, of course, in which faith is difficult. But faith is not a mood which changes. It is an attitude that beneath all moods holds on to the belief in the wisdom and guidance of the creative love.

When they are cutting a tunnel through a mountain they start from both ends and work toward the middle. The engineer sets the level and the direction, and the men have the task of going on with the work according to plan. There must be moments when, working there in the dark, they wonder whether they are not making for some dead end, and will find that all their work is

gone for nothing. But they trust the engineer, and hold on step by step and yard by yard, whatever obstacle, either of rocks or floods, they meet. And one day they get there.

That is what faith asks of us,—the loyalty that holds on to the light in our souls, the assurance that beneath all things knows that the worlds were framed by the word and wisdom and love of God.

### Our Coöperation.

This faith demands our coöperation.

It is a world which is not yet perfect, a world which God of himself could not perfect. The task of creation demands our coöperation, for we are part of his plan, our perfection and our development as his children.

The material earth is only a cradle for a race of redeemed humanity. It is the sphere of a kingdom of human souls under the rule of God. This means that we must take a hand. That is part of the condition. And it is our want of coöperation,—our blundering, our blindness, our selfishness,—which is the real root of all that is wrong and all that challenges our faith.

No man ever yet faced the world in faith, whatever might meet him, and became a pessimist about life. Pessimism and despair and the things that make it are rooted in unbelief. The man of faith brings something into the situation that changes the look of it, and that finally overcomes and redeems what at first seemed tragic and hopeless.

The things that darken the world are sin, selfishness, fear. To the pure all things are pure. To the brave all things are a call to courage. To the hopeful there is always some hint of blue about the sky,—at least there is a rainbow in the cloud that tells of the sun behind. When we are wrong our world goes wrong, for our minds are the measure of our world.

It is not enough to trust the love of God to put all things right, and do nothing. The love that made the world can go on to redeem it from the mishandling of our mistakes, but only as we let that love into our lives and build it into the world around us. And that is God's call, the call of faith.

We believe that this is God's world, and it is our business to see that he comes to reign in it, that it becomes his kingdom.

(Other addresses by Mr. Reid will follow throughout the year.)

# A Dynamic Ministry.

## Rev. Edgar Young Mullins, D. D.

**President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.**

A dynamic ministry. I might call it an efficient ministry: it would mean about the same thing.

I rather like the word "dynamic" because it suggests power, power back at the source rather than power where power is applied.

An efficient ministry might mean a ministry which, like a pocket knife, has a keen edge and can cut. A dynamic ministry means a ministry that has a dynamo behind it, that is impelled by something greater than itself.

So I like the word "dynamic" in this connection rather better than the word "efficient." But the two go together. Efficiency comes from the training, the sharpening of the mind and the wit, and the knowing how to adapt the power to the task. The dynamics of the ministry come from the background of the minister, the place where a man lives spiritually.

I wish I could get my thought before you in this form, the importance of viewing the ministry from the standpoint of the cost of success rather than from the standpoint of the success itself, or the method.

Sometimes a minister misses what he seeks in the ministry because he is thinking about the ways and means of getting the results, or he is thinking about the results, rather than about the cost that must be paid to secure them.

I fancy that if men would think more of the cost and less of the method, the method would be much more successful and the result would be much greater.

Perhaps an illustration will suggest what I mean.

If you were to see a man lying at the base of a cliff bleeding and half dead, you would almost inevitably infer that he had fallen there. But if you were to see a man out-

lined against the sky on the summit of the cliff, you would know of a certainty that he did not fall up there. Something else was required to get him there save gravitation. Of course, if there was any machinery he might have ridden up, but if there was no machinery to hoist him he must have climbed up. In other words, he paid the price of the effort to reach the elevation he attained. He did not simply yield to the forces around him in order to be pulled to the level that he attained.

A ministry, in the sense in which I am speaking of it, is like that. What are the forces that lift a man to the summit, whether it is a little summit or a big one? Any man may attain a high place in the ministry who will pay the price. I am thinking of the cost that is behind it rather than of the success itself, and I am trying to emphasize the importance of thinking in terms of the cost rather than in terms of the success or in terms of the methods of obtaining the success.

"I Have Learned . . . . I Can!"

I could take a text that would give me what I am trying to say. In Philippians 4 the apostle Paul has a word of power. I am fond of verses 11, 12 and 13: "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content. I have learned how to be abased, and I have learned how to abound. In all things and at all times I have learned how to be content. I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me."

I would put together the two phrases "I have learned" and "I can." The two go together. That is the formula of Paul's ministry: "I have learned,—I can!"

The life of discipline is the life of power. That is what Paul means to say. "I have learned" of books, yes. By experience, yes. By success, certainly, for Paul had constant success. By failure, occasionally,—failure in the outward sense. By suffering,—he had that all the time. By privation. By his "thorn in the flesh," which he had been referring to and which he had in mind here, and which he prayed three times that the Lord would remove, and the Lord would not remove.

"I have learned." He had been disciplined by the task and by the trouble and by the difficulties and by the burdens and by the pains and by the suffering. Out of it grew the other word, "I can."

Somebody has said that is the greatest phrase that human lips can utter, "I can"; and that the most depressing thing he can utter is, "I cannot."

The life of discipline is the life of power. For the ministry of today we do not have to endure what Paul endured of persecutions, and the kind of privations and all the other things that Paul had to endure. But I would like to get it fixed in our minds that there is a drudgery side to the ministry. I do not know any other word to express it except that. It is simply sheer, hard, grinding work.

Whether it be work with books, or work in the pastorate, or work with the problems of organization, sometimes a task of achievement outwardly, sometimes a task of difficulty, you have to just put up with things you cannot remedy. Sometimes it is the problem of daring in us that is called for by the situation. Sometimes it is a problem of just simply suffering things that cannot be cured. But always there is the problem of study and work and prayer, and then, constantly, the cost that I am talking about.

Ruskin said no great thing is done with effort. Men do not do the great things with effort, with strain and agony. Of course, there is a spiritual agony: that is what I am talking about. But the agony to achieve a deed is different.

Ruskin did not mean to inveigh against work. He was talking about living back at the source of power, making the fire so hot that it just emitted power. The sparks flew outward because of the inherent force that was there.

The great deeds that men do in the ministry are much like that. They are the spontaneous outcome of a power that has been accumulated as one dwells back at the springs of power.

If one thinks of one's ministry like that, from the standpoint of what it costs, of the price that must be paid in strife, in prayer, and in drudgery, then he will get the results.

Raphael had in his career as a painter two epochs that were distinct and clearly marked. In the early stages he was angular in his use of the brush. He was heavy, awkward, and more or less painful in his painting. People saw it, and it was rather crude.

After he had continued for some years in that style of painting, suddenly he burst forth with a marvelous freedom in the use of the brush, and his wonderful genius came to full fruition. You have the result of it in the masterpiece of all paintings, the Sistine Madonna.

What was Raphael doing in the early stages? He was learning the technique of painting. He was learning the part of it that underlay power. He worked and drudged and strained in order that he might acquire the skill that was called for in the great painting.

In the chariot race in "Ben Hur," behind the Arabian steeds the Jew had skillfully manipulated his chariot so that he destroyed the chariot of his opponent and won the race, much to your delight. When someone asked him how he could so handle those Arabian horses, he said:

"I did it by the muscle that I acquired in my shoulders and arms and hands when I was a galley slave to a Roman."

He had been a galley slave in the early stages, you remember, in Lew Wallace's story, and so he had acquired the physical powers that enabled him to win the chariot race.

It is the galley slave side of life that I am talking about. Of course, that is an extreme illustration, for our ministry is glorious, wonderful, full of exuberance and joy: but, relatively speaking, we all have that technique period when we are learning, and it goes on through life, in a sense.

### A Divine Call.

A dynamic ministry will have a sense of the divine call.

I do not know how you feel about a call to the ministry. There is a sense in which all men ought to be called to the vocation they pursue in life. I do not doubt that the men who have the greatest power in the world are men who have such a feeling of sense of duty behind their life. But somehow in my own life there was a special impression that came to me: "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel!"

That is what Paul said about his ministry, and I believe that the minister with that sort of a conviction behind him has sources of power that some other men do not have. The men who take up the ministry because they prefer it, because it has good social standing, because it is attractive and is a way of doing good,—I do not say that such men accomplish nothing, nor do I say that every man who enters the ministry without the sort of conviction I speak of has mistaken his calling. Sometimes it does not take that form of an inward call at all, but it is just a sense of duty which the man pursues or follows, or a desire which he fulfils. But whatever be the form I think it ought to be a feeling deep enough to be somewhat special, and not just a general feeling that men have in all other callings of life.

*Dr. E. Y. Mullins of Louisville.*

The reason I believe that is the great requirement in the ministry is that the ministry always has the downward pull of the world to overcome.

The minister is working directly against the gravitation of society and life. He has got to have something that is adequate to offset that, and unless he is undergirded with some such feeling of the divine presence in his life, and a divine purpose; unless he can say and appreciate the words of Jesus where he said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit," I think his ministry is lacking in one element of power that is important for a dynamic ministry.

### Divine Guidance.

In the second place, a dynamic ministry

should be surrendered to the divine guidance.

That sounds commonplace, but, my friends, it is not nearly as commonplace as it sounds,—men who are surrendered to divine guidance in the ministry!

The surest way for a man to defeat the highest end of his own ministry is to take the bit in his mouth and take charge of his own life.

Sometimes a young minister says: "I have got to have a church of about such a size, or a salary of about such and such a figure, or a field in such and such a section or place, and I am going to wait until I get it. I am not going to take anything else but that."

I know men who have gone for years without ever getting settled in the ministry. I know a splendid fellow who did that, and it was eight or ten years before he got a place where he could settle down and begin to do serious work. He had a conception of the sort of place that God ought to prepare for him. He waited until God came along with the sort of place that he set up for himself and demanded before he would accept a place.

I said to him, as I always say to a minister: "Enter whatever door is open!" Do not be too particular about the field, because if a man will pursue that principle in his life and pursue it consistently, and do what God guides him to do, his life will bear the greatest fruit possible.

I might say to you, brethren, that nearly everything I planned in my own ministry has been defeated. I have never done anything that I wanted to do. Of course, after getting into the things where God put me I learned that they were the things I wanted, but I did not want that beforehand.

I refused to go into educational work. Half a dozen times I refused it because I said that was not what I wanted to do. But I got in, finally. I had not been in it two months until I felt it was the greatest work in the world, and I have been at it ever since.

The upshot of it has been that I have never followed the line in my own life that I planned for myself, and I believe my life has been far more fruitful by being overruled than if I had carried out what I chose. Prevention of my doing my own choice was the preparation for what came afterwards. As I look back upon my life I say to myself I could have defeated its usefulness over and over again if God had not come in and overruled me.

The best attitude for a young preacher to take,—and an old preacher, too, for that matter,—is the prayer, "O Lord, make me equal to my opportunity, whatever it is!" Then get ready for it!

As an old friend of mine used to say: "Make an effort to endeavor to try to be ready when the time comes!"

If you will do that, and pay attention to the dynamics of the ministry, when the time comes and the door opens it will be a glorious open door. But you should not try to force open a door that God has not opened.

### Magnify the Work!

The next thing I would suggest is to magnify the place of work in which God places you.

Fall in love with the field that you are in! It is awfully hard for a man to be looking all the time for a new field and accomplish much in the field he is in. He is almost certain to get a spiritual squint. He becomes cross-eyed. It is difficult to do his best work.

The man who magnifies the work he is in has joy in the work and success in the work; and I tell you that any group of Christ's people who belong to his church is a tremendous engine of power.

A church of spiritual people where you are working is a place where you can move the whole world. It is like the philosopher's garden: it may be narrow, but it is high, it reaches clear up to the sky. That is what the church is.

You remember the fable about the old Norse god who took his hammer one day in his anger and discouragement and smote the earth. He wept when he produced no seeming effect by his blows. While he was weeping a beam came from a distant heaven, and an angel stood by him and asked him what he was weeping about. He said:

"Because I cannot make any impression on the earth."

The angel said: "You are blind! You do not see what you are doing. Look!"

The god looked, and the place where he had struck the earth had become the chan-

nel of a great river, and a stream was coming down.

The angel said: "When you struck the earth the vibration was felt in the distant stars from which I came."

That is symbolic of what the ministry is. A man may reach to the utmost heavens by his blows.

I had an experience last fall that did my soul good. I was in Barcelona, Spain, holding a conference. There was a group of people twice the size of this. A man sitting in front, who was the leader of the work there, pointed out to me a young fellow and said:

"Look at that young fellow! You ought to be much interested in that young man."

I said: "Who is he?"

He said: "He is a hero of the faith. He is a creature of the gospel. He has been put in jail repeatedly. He has been persecuted, but he goes on." And he added: "You remember when in 1920 you and Dr. Gambrell were here on a tour you went out to a little village called Sabadell and talked to a group of young people in the main church there? Do you remember what you spoke about?"

I said: "I think I made an appeal to that group of young people to give themselves to Christ, and I expressed the belief that some of those boys might enter the ministry if they listened to the Spirit of God."

He said: "In talking to them you made an appeal to the young people, and that boy yielded himself to the ministry. He has been to a theological seminary, and has become a preacher."

I said "Thank God!" and I took courage to go ahead.

Just a word dropped by the way, you have no idea of its influence! It may come back after six years in a strong personality like that young preacher. You do not know what you are doing when you preach the gospel. It is the most romantic thing in the world. There is nothing else that is so full of surprises and glorious results. I say, therefore, magnify your field!

### Develop Your Personality!

Then I would say, develop your own elements of power, your own personality!

This also is commonplace, but not altogether familiar in men's experience.

A man ought to have a good body. He ought to cultivate his health. His first duty is to be a good animal. Not in the matter of gluttony,—animals do not indulge in gluttony: humans do that. It takes somebody with imagination to be a glutton. Animals quit when they get their appetite satisfied. Sometimes men do not.

A preacher ought to have some way of keeping his body fit. I do it by means of golf.

Dr. Edward Everett Hale said there are three things a man ought to do. He ought to live in the open air as much as possible 365 days in every year. That is for his physical health. Secondly, he ought to keep in touch with the common people. The third thing is awfully hard to do, but it is necessary and important. He said, talk every day to somebody that knows more than you!

A man learns as he goes along in life. One of the greatest lessons anybody learns is that he knows mighty little. A man knows more when he is twenty than he ever knows after that. Someone has said that at twenty a man is wise, at 30 he begins to doubt his wisdom, at 40 he begins to suspect that he is a fool, at 50 he knows he is. If a man can ever honestly come to the conviction that he is something of a fool, that is the greatest growth in grace he ever has had. You have got to come there before you can become wise.

Cultivate your personality! I had a teacher who used to say, "Work your weak points!" The old adage is, "If you have strong points, work them!" but my teacher used to say, "Work your weak points," because some of your weak points may turn out to be strong points.

Do not condemn yourself to weakness in a given direction until you know you are hopeless in that direction! I told one of my students that one day, and he said:

"That is all right, Doctor! You say, 'Work your weak points, and work your strong points,' and you would work your fool self to death if you would keep that up!"

Talking about working the weak points, I will give you an example.

A friend of mine held a meeting with me once, one of the most remarkable preachers I ever knew. He preached on the subject, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the

wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." He was a pictorial preacher. He painted a picture on the wall on one side of the pulpit, a picture of the serpents in the wilderness, and the Israelites, and the people bitten and dying, and the lifting up of the brazen serpent, and the people looking at the serpent and being healed. Then on the other wall he painted a picture of Christ crucified. He gave us a view of Calvary and the cross, a view of the crowd and the crucifixion. He painted for us the whole scene.

When he had painted those two pictures he began to draw the lesson, and preached one of the most powerful evangelistic sermons I ever heard, in which he brought out simple belief in Christ as the condition of a man's salvation. A great and wonderful sermon!

Here is what he told me about himself. Up to the time he studied homiletics in the seminary he had condemned himself from ever using the imagination. This is what he had said:

"I am a logical preacher. I am chain logic. I can reason and argue and debate, but I have no imagination, and I am not going to try to have any."

One day his teacher in homiletics told about an old preacher in Virginia that used this sort of illustration, carrying on a debate between Paul and James. The old preacher said:

"Let us listen to Paul and James arguing it out! Paul, will you please step here a minute? Paul said, 'Yes, I will come.' All right, Paul, thank you! Now, will you stand here, and James, won't you come this way a moment? I want to ask you a question. Yes, James is coming. Thank you, James! Now, Paul, you and James tell us about it!"

Paul began to give his views about a man being justified by faith, not by works, and then James gave his views.

That was the method the old preacher used, point by point, Paul and James speaking. The device was so vivid and so realistic that my friend, Fred Hale, who painted the pictures on the wall, said:

"I was born again as a preacher in that moment. Up to that time I had said I had no imagination. I saw at a glance that I had abundance of imagination. From that time I have used it in preaching."

He had great crowds and great spiritual power. A new dynamic came into that man's ministry.

I say, work out weak points as well as your strong points! Discover if you have condemned yourself to weakness at a particular point, whereas you may have tremendous power at that very point!

### Spiritual Cause and Effect.

I would also say, Study spiritual cause and effect!

The great thing in science is just that. They study physical cause and effect. We ministers do not study spiritual cause and effect as much as we ought. Certain things produce certain effects spiritually.

At that time I referred to when my friend Hale was assisting me, we had a wonderful meeting, a great many conversions and baptisms at the close of it. After the meetings had been going on two or three days, and before there were any professions of faith, we were driving to visit some people one day, and he said to me:

"Mullins, we are going to have a great meeting here!"

I said: "That sounds good, but how do you know?"

He said: "I know it."

"How do you know it?"

"Because," he said, "spiritual causes are at work, and spiritual causes always produce their effects."

"What are the causes?"

"Of course, the Spirit of God first, but your church is busy, your members are busy, you are busy. The members are attending. The church is ready for it. The Sunday school and the teachers are in line. I am here trying my best. All the forces that produce a revival are active."

His prophecy was absolutely fulfilled.

Then he went on to say: "You can always put the spiritual cause and the spiritual effect together. If you study the causes that produce the effects, and labor to bring into operation the causes, the dynamics, the effects will all come."

In other words, look for the causes that must operate to produce the effects you are trying to produce!

### Personal Life.

That brings me back to the foundation of

it all, and that is the preacher's own personal religious life, his own personal intellectual life, his own personal prayer life. That is the heart of the whole matter.

I spoke yesterday of brooding over sermons. Alexander McLaren of Manchester, England, one of the greatest expository preachers of the last century, was asked once, at the close of his ministry, if he were to select one single thing that was most influential in giving power to him in the pulpit, what would that be.

He answered thus, a most singular answer:

"The thing that gives me power in the pulpit more than any other one thing is the last hour before preaching."

What he meant was, that last hour was spent in prayerful assimilation of his thoughts and coming into sympathy with his audience and with God, so that when he delivered his message it would be full of dynamite, full of power.

You see what I mean by that. You know that if you keep your sermon at arm's length until you get into the pulpit, you have got to exercise your memory to get it back. If you have fused it into your very nature, when you get into the pulpit the sermon is eager to come out of you and pass over to the audience. It is not hard to deliver it. It is hard to keep it back.

Behind that is the study that preceded it. It is the prayer and the agony and the brooding over the whole subject.

Jesus Christ does for you preachers a wonderful thing: he transfers to you his own authority. "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth," said Christ. "Go ye, therefore, and preach the gospel, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end!" That is exactly what it means, that he transfers his authority to others. I am not talking about official authority, or law-making: I am speaking of spiritual authority.

I sometimes look back to my last years in the ministry. I was a pastor 15 years before I became a teacher. In my church in Newton Center, Massachusetts, there were a great many young people growing up, and the parents would tell me how anxious they were about them. I had tried and had not succeeded so well in getting them into the church.

I had two months' vacation, and I went abroad. I spent a large part of my time brooding over my problems, and particularly the task of winning those young people to God. I prayed about it a great deal, and thought about it a great deal. I was just taking my church into my spiritual consciousness and keeping it there, brooding over it and praying over it, and getting myself in tune.

When I got back I held a meeting, as I always did when I was a pastor,—every year I held a meeting early in the season, in September or October, to get my church in tune for the year's work. Usually I preached myself. I did not call in an evangelist, or even another pastor, except once in a while. I would preach myself.

The second or third night after we had started Mrs. Alvah Hovey came to me and said:

"Pastor, we are going to have a great time this week and next in these services!"

I said: "Mrs. Hovey I love to hear you say that, but how do you know?"

She said: "Whenever the pastor of a church gets in the state you are in, we always have results."

I said: "What sort of a state am I in?" I was not conscious of any state, particularly.

She said: "You have got something you did not have before, and the church has already felt it, and we are just as certain to get kindled as the sun rises and sets."

We baptized about all the young people there were in that church that winter. It was the greatest year I ever had in the ministry. What was the secret of it? It was nothing in the world but the fact that somehow I had gotten into a mood that was irresistible. I was in a mood of spiritual eagerness and urgency, you might say, an imperative mood that could not be resisted. Wherever I went on a pastoral visit, whenever I prayed, whenever I preached, whatever I did, people felt the contact with a man that was trying his best to do something. That is what the lady meant. And it has been one of the greatest lessons of my whole ministry. So I got right back to where I started: I had gotten back to the sources of power, and the blessed result came!

# Baskets of Roses!

## Remarks of Mr. George S. Palmer, of New London, Conn., at the Dedication of Palmer Hall, Northfield Seminary, October 15, 1927.

Friends of the School, trustees, faculty, and especially our young friends:

I know that you will feel with me the delicacy of my position here today, and can readily understand why I would rather be seen and not heard. However, I realize that a personal matter heads up today between you young women and Mrs. Palmer and myself. Two or three days ago I heard a lecturer say, "The finest thoughts and highest thoughts originate in the heart, and not in the head." I am quite sure that the thoughts I shall express here will come straight from the heart.

*Mr. and Mrs. George S. Palmer of New London, Conn.*

It is due to you to know why this building; and then, why here. Emerson said that whatever words you utter you are always speaking of yourself. I believe it. That induces me to cast all modesty aside for two or three minutes, to tell you the underlying story of this building.

As a country boy I began my education upon a well-whittled bench, with a cast-iron stove, usually red hot, in my immediate vicinity, while the boys on the rear seats were freezing because of the icy drafts blowing through the ill-fitting doors. You can easily visualize the old country schoolhouse, and you can imagine how my feeling was excited when, by mere chance, I was permitted to enter the Norwich Free Academy, with its high ceilings, desks, globes terrestrial and celestial, beautiful library with a bright red carpet and glittering rows of books in polished cases, to all of which I was given the key. I felt just such a thrill as many of you have felt upon coming here, because I know you have come from similar conditions. Great waves of gratitude went through my heart then and have been going through my heart ever since. It is the ripples of those waves that I hope everyone of you will hear sounding through this building.

Mr. D. L. Moody, at about the beginning of his religious work, called upon a rich man in Fall River for a contribution. With great trepidation he entered the office and told his story. When he had finished, the rich man arose, grasped his hand, and said, "I realize what you are trying to do. I know of your work. Gladly will I give you something for it," and named a sum that was far in excess of what Mr. Moody had dared to hope for.

As Mr. Moody, overwhelmed with surprise and gratitude, falteringly stammered out his fear that he could never repay such generosity, his friend said simply:

"Just pass it on, pass it on!"

Mr. Moody's whole life was devoted to

the business of passing it on. He realized, and I believe that we should realize, "that no great blessing that we have received becomes truly our own until God has shown us that through us it has become a blessing to others."

These Schools were founded, these fine buildings here and at Mount Hermon have been built, these grounds beautified, and this personnel developed for nearly a half century, out of a self-sacrificing love and out of gratitude expressing itself in the wonderful work of helping young women and young men to make the best of themselves and to develop into finer personalities as they move along through life. Sydney Smith said that many people pass their years in lowering empty buckets into empty wells, and fritter away their old age in drawing them up again. These Schools were founded to furnish deep wells of the facts of knowledge, of the conclusions of experience, of the elements of wisdom, of high ideals and the essentials of true religion, that you and your fellow students may draw up your buckets full and brimming over with that living water which will not only satisfy your present need, but will be strength and solace to you in your future.

I hesitate to speak of what these Schools have meant to me, and the associations of this spot to both Mrs. Palmer and myself. From the time I came here as a young man, saw what a fine work my boyhood friend Evelyn Hall was doing here, stayed at the Homestead, and with Mr. Moody went in his little buggy down across the flats onto a primitive ferry boat which crossed the river to Mount Hermon, down through the many fruitful years all of these interests and feelings of affection have developed and grown year by year in contact with Mr. Moody's children, with his relatives, and with all the corps of assistants of which Mr. Duley has spoken. We have often, Mrs. Palmer in the later years and I for more than forty years, lifted up our eyes to these hills, whence help has come. I should like to dwell upon these associations, but I note that this rarely beautiful day is drawing to a close with a glorious sunset beyond the purple hills, and I will therefore merely touch upon a story which in a way symbolizes the essence of what I have tried to convey to you,—the tale of Saint Elizabeth of old.

With a heart always full of affection and interest for the needy, one day, filling a basket with bread and hiding it under her mantle, she passed out of the castle gate toward the village below. Her husband met her and asked her what she was carrying. She hesitated, because she was modest and desired that her good deeds should be unknown. At last, reluctantly she drew aside the folds of her mantle, and lo and behold, the bread was gone and the basket was filled with roses!

Whatever Mrs. Palmer and I have ever in word or song or deed brought here, we have always gone away carrying baskets of roses!

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## Gift Subscription Fund.

Contributions are invited to send this magazine free to missionaries, and in special cases. Many requests reach our office. **Contributing Subscriptions** are $2 a year, but any sum, small or large, will be welcome.

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### Personal Note.

The editor of this magazine has been granted leave from duties in connection with the Northfield Schools in order that he may devote time and thought to a carefully studied and full interpretation of his father's life and career such as was not possible when he compiled the hurried biography of D. L. Moody at the time of his death. He would welcome any reliable information that friends can give him. Such may be addressed to W. R. Moody, East Northfield, Mass.

# Studies in Mark.

## January 1, 1928.

## John the Baptist and Jesus.

Mark 1-13.

Mark's Gospel is different from the others in that it does not linger over any introductory or earlier matters, but plunges straight into its subject. It pictures Jesus in action, and contains few discourses.

Note the titles that give Mark's estimate of Jesus: Christ, Son of God. In the name Jesus we see his humanity, in Christ his official Messiahship, in Son of God his deity.

*The forerunner of Jesus, 2-8.*

Six months before our Lord was born, a cousin of his had been born under supernatural conditions and named John (Luke 1). Mark identifies John as the fulfilment of prophecies uttered by Isaiah and Malachi: a messenger, a living voice, the New Testament Elijah.

The supernatural happenings that surrounded the birth of John and Jesus did not ripen into any visible results. Both boys were merged among the common people. But in A. D. 26 or so God's time has come. He finds John in the wilderness and brings him to the Jordan region with a ringing call to repentance.

How did John prepare the way for Messiah?

(a) By preaching the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins. By repentance John meant a change of mind in regard to sin because it is sin; a reaction of the soul against sin, leading to renunciation of sin and to pardon; something that changed character and conduct; that touched the will as well as conscience and emotion, and so led to amendment of life; something mystical, but plain and practical in everyday life.

(b) By publicly baptizing those who heeded and repented and renounced sin. Baptism was an outward symbol of inward cleansing, an outward confession of initiation into a higher ethical life.

(c) By proclaiming a mightier Coming One who should baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire, thus awakening expectation and faith. This prophecy was first fulfilled at Pentecost, and is for every believer.

*The baptism of Jesus, 9-11.*

God's time for Jesus has also come. At the priestly age of 30 he leaves the carpenter shop at Nazareth forever, and follows the crowd to Jordan, seeking baptism by John. But he had no sin to repent of? True, but he must "fulfil all righteousness" (Matthew 3. 15), identifying himself with the people, taking the sinner's place as he did on the cross, setting his seal upon John's ministry and message, undergoing the rite as a mark of dedication to God. It was a real, not a make-believe baptism.

Luke (3. 21) says he was praying as he was baptized. For what was he praying?

Our Lord's humble obedience to baptism brings him immediate blessing. He has a wonderful testimony from the open heavens: God the Spirit descending upon him in the visible form of a dove, God the Father with audible voice saying, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Now, if never before, Jesus is conscious of his true deity, and of his blameless life as boy and man.

So his baptism marked a spiritual crisis, his enduement with the Spirit, and his dedication to public ministry. The church is now celebrating the 1900th anniversary of these events.

How can we prepare the way of the Lord in our own lives, in the lives of others?

How shall we live so as to be well pleasing to God?

*Golden Text—He must increase, but I must decrease. John 3. 30.*

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## January 8, 1928.

## Jesus and the Sick.

Mark 1. 21-34.

A crowded sabbath day in Capernaum! Mark hurries from place to place, picturing Lord Jesus teaching and healing, showing how strenuous were his labors from early morn to late into the night. And there is no indication that it was an exceptional day.

*Forenoon at the synagogue, 21-28.*

Our Lord was a habitual "churchgoer," and here took advantage of the prevailing opportunity to speak. The people were astonished at his teaching,—not at what he taught, perhaps, so much as at the way he taught. The scribes were like lawyers, basing their teaching on tradition and precedent. Our Lord taught with first-hand authority.

A man possessed with a demon (unclean spirit) was also at church. This problem of demon-possession must be explained. Some say it was a form of insanity, or dual personality, or what not. The Bible plainly ascribes separate personality to the demon. It never speaks of mental or physical healing of the victim. Here our Lord rebuked the demon and bade him "come out." The unfortunate man was normal when the demon had come out.

Competent and reliable authorities assert that demon-possession is a reality in the Orient, China, and perhaps other lands today. And demons come out when bade in the name of Lord Jesus.

*Noontime in Peter's home, 29-31.*

The genuineness of the cure was proved by the lady's immediate ability to go about her household duties, not suffering from the weakening effects of fever.

Blessing always comes when Christ enters the home.

*Evening at the door, 32-34.*

Sabbath ended at even, so the people could now travel and carry their sick to this healer without breaking the law.

What a wonderful night that must have been in Capernaum! Picture a city with suffering everywhere but with no doctors, or only the crudest medical ideas, such as we know of in Oriental and uncivilized lands today where the gospel has not yet come: and think what our Lord's healing ministry meant! It enhances and glorifies the work of medical missions at home and abroad today. Indeed, we do not appreciate enough the healing ministry in our midst by physicians and doctors and nurses. On another page in this issue is reference to a nationwide Christian Physicians' Association.

This day's work is like a cameo in a few words of our Lord's mission on earth: teaching, cleansing, healing, with unique authority and the testimony that he was the holy one of God.

*Golden Text—He hath done all things well: he maketh even the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak! Mark 7. 37.*

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## January 15, 1928.

## Jesus and Sinners.

**Mark 2. 1-17.**

There are two separate incidents here. One occurred in a house in Capernaum, the other beside the sea. The first was the healing of a paralyzed man (paralytic), in the course of teaching the people that crowded to hear our Lord, the second was his call of Levi (Matthew) to join his band of disciples. But they are alike in that they showed our Lord's attitude toward "sinners," and that scribes were present at both places (6, 16), watching our Lord's words and acts, and criticizing him. It is the first breath of conflict or opposition we have met in Mark.

*Healing of a paralytic, 1-12.*

The incident is familiar, but the teacher must explain if necessary the way Oriental houses were built, and how the four friends could unroof the roof over our Lord's head.

The lessons and applications are also familiar:

The friendly interest, coöperation, determination, and ingenuity of the four to get to Lord Jesus in spite of all difficulties;

Especially their faith, including the sick man's too, that moved our Lord to action;

His assertion for the first time of sins forgiven, thus meeting the man's greater need;

The challenge of the scribes, not openly but in their hearts, which was quite justified if Jesus was not God;

Our Lord's instant supernatural recognition of their heart reasonings;

The challenge of alternatives, in which he validated his own authority to pardon sins by his exercise of power in the physical cure.

The incident may be regarded as an acted parable of the central theme of the gospel, the forgiveness of sins. Paralysis may symbolize spiritual and moral helplessness and sin. Faith was the channel of blessing. The result was complete and immediate. Crowds often keep people from Christ: crowds of selfish interests, of worldly pleasures, of worries, etc.

*Call of Levi, 13-17.*

We are not told whether this was our Lord's first contact with Levi, or not. The point to note is, his immediate response to Christ's call to follow him. Would that we were all as willing and prompt to leave all if necessary and follow him in service!

His zeal and concern for his business associates and friends among the tribute-collectors and "sinners" (here used to mean folks who were not strict in their observance of the Mosaic law and ritual and traditions, irreligious persons,) led him to open his house to them so that they might meet Lord Jesus. What if Christian homes in this land were opened in the same spirit?

The scribes, being religious snobs, now blamed Jesus for associating with religious outcasts. His reply justified his own actions, and unveiled the object for which he came to earth. The collision between our Lord and the social and religious conventions of the time was growing.

Sin must first be dealt with before misery can be removed.

"We are all in the habit of praying for our loved ones. How many are thus brought day by day and laid at the feet of Jesus! Our faith may be the necessary link between him and those for whom we pray and work."—F. B. Meyer.

*Golden Text—I came not to call righteous, but sinners. Mark 2. 17.*

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## January 22, 1928.

## Jesus and the Law.

**Mark 2. 18-22; 3. 1-6.**

*Jesus and fasting, 2. 18-22.*

It was a fast day. The Mosaic law had ordained only one fast day in the year, the

Day of Atonement, but by Christ's time the ritualists were observing two fast days each week. Such fasts were manmade: they had nothing to do with the law.

Fasting may express repentance and sorrow, or it may be the result of one's mental stress, or it may be an effort to exalt the spirit by subjugating the body. It is a recognized means of grace in Oriental lands today, more so than in this land. But fasting in Christ's day was mostly meaningless ritual.

The disciples of John the Baptist (who was in prison,) and of the Pharisees were observing this fast, but people noticed that the disciples of Lord Jesus did not, and they inquired why not.

Our Lord's answer comprises three Oriental figures of speech. The principle laid down in each is that of congruity and commonsense.

Fasting should mean something, he said. It should be appropriate to existing conditions.

Then he proceeded to stress the impossibility of pressing the new life he was teaching into the old forms of Judaism. Religious forms and institutions may change with changing conditions. But be careful to note that Lord Jesus was not a modernist in the current meaning of the word, as some claim! He did not eviscerate or deny fundamental truth and revelation. All he set aside was the traditions and accretions of men. See the Golden Text! He did not declaim against fasting, or against cloaks, or against wineskins. Forms and ceremonies have their proper value and uses. They are the frames for truths. But they may be replaced when new expressions of truth and life are more appropriate.

*Jesus and the sabbath, 3. 1-6.*

Mark's narrative now tells of conflict between our Lord and the Pharisees over the sabbath. First is the episode of the wheatfield, 2. 23-28, and next this story. But here again it was not so much a question of the observance of the Mosaic law of the sabbath as of the traditions of the Jews.

The sinister cloud of the hostility of the Pharisees is growing bigger and blacker (see 2. 16, 18, 24; 3. 2, 6). Matthew (12. 10) says that the Pharisees started things on this occasion by asking if it was allowable to cure on the sabbath, looking for something on which to accuse him. For it was not an emergency case: this man could wait till next day.

A dramatic situation develops. It marks a turning point in our Lord's career. Previous conflicts may have been accidental. Here is deliberation on both sides.

Our Lord summons the man with the shriveled hand to rise, then he challenges the Pharisees with a question. It involved the character of the God back of the Pharisees' ritual. Was God a stickler for legal and ritual observances at any cost, or one who sees and mitigates human need first of all? Here was a sufferer, and here was Jesus with power to heal. The moral necessity was for immediate action. Jesus must end suffering.

Their silence implied such callousness, such hardening of heart, that it made our Lord angry, indignant, over their condition. They had no pity for the unfortunate man: all they wanted was to trap him.

Verse 6 is surprising in view of the prevailing political and religious hostility between the Pharisees and the Herodians. (Consult a Bible dictionary!) Only a deeper hostility to Jesus can explain the alliance. How the Pharisees already hated Jesus! But why?

What principles to govern the observance of the Christian Sunday can be derived from our Lord's attitude to the Jewish sabbath?

*Golden Text—Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets! I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. Matthew 5. 17.*

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**January 29, 1928.**

**The Growing Fame of Jesus.**

**Mark 3. 7-12; 6. 53-56.**

In these passages first note Mark's vivid words, then ask why the people crowded so to our Lord! Do not lose sight of him as the central figure!

*Great crowds.*

Mark emphasizes two points: the vast number of people, mostly sick people, who crowded to him, and the different and distant places whence they came, North, South, East. Use a map! The people literally fell on him, crushed him.

In 6. 53-56 it is the same. No sooner is our Lord recognized than word spreads over the whole district,—villages, cities and farms alike,—and they hurriedly bring their sick folk to him.

*Why such crowds?*

They believed the reports about Jesus and his power to heal.

We imagine the same thing would happen today if we heard Jesus was in the neighborhood. Almost anyone who poses as a healer can get a following nowadays. Of course the Roman Catholic church has always played this string at shrines like Lourdes.

In 3. 10 and 6. 56 the people tried to touch our Lord or the fringe of his cloak. Maybe they had heard about the woman in 5. 27-29! It may have been the same superstitious, magic notion as seeks contact with alleged relics in Romanist churches and shrines today. But here the people besought our Lord himself for healing.

*Golden Text—The common people heard him gladly. Mark 12. 37.*

# Christian Endeavor Topics

## Mrs. Ida Q. Moulton.

### What Are the Values of Daily Devotions?

**Psalm 40. 1-8. January 1.**

History tells of a young paint-grinder in the studio of Italy's greatest master, who developed striking evidences of artistic skill. When an enemy of the great teacher went to the boy and urged him to found a school of his own, telling him that wealth and honors and invitations to kings' palaces might be his, the youth replied:

"I am not ambitious to found a school or dwell in a palace, but I am ambitious to catch Raphael's spirit and reproduce myself in his ideals."

If Christ is the center of our daily devotions,—and that is his rightful place,—our ambition as we emerge from the Quiet Hour should be to reproduce in ourselves the spirit and ideals of Christ.

* * * * *

A heathen chief of a tribe in South Africa used to say to those who professed to be converted:

"If you become better men and women by being Christians you may remain so, but if not I will not let you be Christians at all!"

If daily devotions do not make us better men and women to live with under one roof, of what real value are they? Sanctimonious behaviour, pious phrases, or the full keeping of the letter of law cannot deceive the home folk. If our devotions lead us to a higher spiritual level they'll be the first to notice it and want to know our secret.

* * * * *

What should our daily devotions include?

**D**—esires for a better acquaintence with God;

**E**—arnest searchings after his will;

**V**—erifying the statements of the Bible with personal experiences;

**O**—bedience to nature's demand to relax and consider whither we are bound;

**T**—aking time to be holy, for hurry leads to worry, worry to loss of power;

**I**—ntrospection. We might sometimes be shocked at what we find in our hearts;

**O**—pen-mindedness, for with a narrow mind our devotions become a burden;

**N**—ourishment directly from the Word. "Starved Christians are far too common";

**S**—piritual motive power, received to live aright, love mankind, and learn the Jesus way of service to our fellow men.

### What Prayer Can Accomplish.

**Mark 20-26. January 8.**

The system in some hospitals by which patients can summon attendance will throw light upon our prayer system.

A patient too weak to lift his arm may touch a button just at his hand, and instantly four lights flash out: one in the office, one in the great hall, two others in different parts of the building. It is impossible for any one to turn those lights out until the call has been answered and the patient visited.

And yet we sometimes question whether the creator and sustainer of the universe has an effectual system to carry our prayers to any part of the world! After all God has said and done it is "impossible" for him not to carry our prayers to their destination.

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A gentleman crossing a dreary moor came at length upon a solitary cottage. He was glad of the shelter, but could not help pondering upon the loneliness of its inmates, and wondering at their self-security.

In the morning, when about to proceed on his way he inquired of its occupant whether she was not afraid to live in this lonely place.

"Oh, no!" replied the aged hostess. "A prayer of faith closes the door at night, and a prayer of thanksgiving opens it in the morning."

Prayer dispels fear.

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The villagers of Blackstone were gathering for their weekly prayer meeting. They were discussing the recent fire in the village that had taken a widow's all.

During the meeting one prayed:

"Bring comfort to the poor widow who lost her little all of worldly goods by fire this day, and raise up friends to help her in her dire need!"

He was hardly through before one rose and said:

"Friends, the Lord has just reminded me that I have a good kitchen table that Martha and I can spare, and enough stuff in the cellar to furnish that table for some time! I believe the Lord will help the rest of you to find chairs, a stove, firewood, bedding, in fact everything to help her start life over again."

Prayer opens opportunities for service.

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"The greatest prayer I have ever known," said a layman of the Missionary Movement, "was in the Gospel Tabernacle, New York City, at the yearly offering for mission

work. The pastor asked another pastor on the platform to offer a short prayer previous to taking the offering. The brother kneeled, and was silent for some time, while the audience wondered what was wrong. At last a sigh, a groan, a smothered cry of joy, —that was all. He arose, and the packed audience was in tears. The offering was over seventy thousand dollars."

### What Difference Does Reading the Bible Make?

**Psalm 1. 1-6; 2 Timothy 3. 14-17. January 15.**

Perhaps no American teacher has won a more enviable reputation for her splendid and lasting influence over her pupils than was gained by Mary Lyon of Mount Holyoke College. A genius as a teacher, her great anxiety for her students, the most of them nominal Christians, was to have them take their religion seriously into practice. She spent an hour twice a week at the chapel reading and explaining the Bible to her students. Not alone America, but lands across the seas attest that such chapel exercises were fruitful times.

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An Oriental student studying in Cambridge (England) came into the light of God after long and cautious inquiries into Christianity. Said he:

"I have been reading your sacred book, and the difference between it and our sacred books of the East is not altogether in its precepts, for there are wonderful precepts, high and great, also in our books; but your book and yours alone contains, I see, the secret of how they may be obeyed."

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A Muslim bought a Gospel for four eggs, as he said he had no money. The following week he returned with the money, and said:

"I've been reading your book. It is very good, but the eggs I gave you in exchange for the book were not fresh. I should like to pay full price for the book."

Bible-reading stirs the conscience. For it is quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4. 12).

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Thirty-five high-caste Hindu students in Tinnevelly (India), roused to interest by the opposition it excited among their people, formed a Bible Reading Society. One of the rules of the society was that they should confine their thoughts strictly to the reading of the Bible without bringing up any objections or asking any difficult questions.

The secretary of that society has been baptized into the church of Christ, and the president and ten other members have applied for baptism.

It makes all the difference in the world whether or not we read the Bible with an open mind.

"If I were a missionary," exclaimed these young men, "I would not argue, I would give the people the New Testament and say, 'Read that!'"

### What Difference Does It Make What We Do on Sunday?

**Mark 2. 23-28; 3. 1-6. January 22.**

This story is told of a barber, who before barber shops were closed on Sunday never saw his children awake from the beginning of the week to the end. The first Sunday he spent at home he heard the children inquire:

"Mamma, who is that man?"

Doesn't it make a difference in the homes of a nation whether or not the head of the house is an utter stranger in his own household? No nation rises higher than its homes.

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In one of J. R. Miller's devotional books is the story of a man who was trying to get his Negro servant to do some unnecessary work on Sunday. He reminded the servant, who was deeply religious, that Jesus said it was lawful to pull an ass or an ox out of a pit on the sabbath.

"Yes, massa," was the reply, "but not if it fell in on Saturday!"

Some would use Jesus' "splendid courage" in breaking the traditions to help people as an example for our breaking the sabbath in our day by labor and amusements.

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Every seventh day is a Sunday. Therefore every seven years one has lived a full year of Sundays. A person at 21 years has had three years of Sundays for his spiritual improvement, one of 35 has had five years, one of 70 ten years of Sundays. Ask the youth behind prison bars, the libertine of middle life, and the would-be suicide in old age, if what they did on these years of Sundays has made a difference in their lives.

Frederic Saunders calls the sabbath the savings-bank of humanity. If we lay away in it all through our youth and prime, week by week and year by year, we shall not be bankrupt in our old age.

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### How Our Church Does Its Work.

**Ephesians 4. 7-16. January 29.**

In China recently representatives from sixteen Christian denominations agreed to dissolve their old sectarian ties and form a new church to be called the Church of Christ in China.

Such an episode ought to cause serious

reflection in our country, if after we have introduced Christianity into that country they should be able to show us how it ought to be practised. People are entitled to affiliate with some organization, but such divisions have been multiplied far beyond reason. The cause of it is to some extent a selfish attachment to organizations, but the main cause is simply an unfortunate failure to perceive how trifling most of the points of difference between the sects really are. —"Salem News."

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The famous rescue worker of Grand Rapids, Melvin E. Trotter, once said:

"I like a deacon that deaks." In other words, "I like the man who attends to the business to which he is especially appointed."

Much trouble has been brewed in churches and denominations by interference. "It pays," says R. P. Anderson, "to be definite, studying how to do our own business with our own hands and brains. Definite work in the church or denomination for definite groups of workers, carrying definite responsibilities, is the ideal method for a church society, or for denominational programs of carrying on."

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"No profit grows where there's no pleasure ta'en, wrote Shakspere. Holy men of old rejoiced in the Temple because they had poured out their treasures upon it. No one can lay claim to the joys of church membership, or the results of well organized benevolences till they have answered the call for money and service.

If our Church's activities are uninteresting to us, and we "don't care" what our denomination is doing, it is because we have done so little for the former, and less for the latter. "Nothing give, nothing have!"

Find the church today with which Christ has clothed himself, and there you'll find the ideal church working in the ideal way! —Adapted from "Unto the Least," by Eugene Thwing.

*Learn a Text a Day.*

## JANUARY, 1928.

SUNDAY, 1st. *The land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven; a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year. Deuteronomy 11. 11, 12.*

Begin the year with God!
Begin with praise
To him whose love will keep
Thee through the days!
Whate'er those days may be,
Or dark or bright,
Walking with him, thy path
Leads to the light!

MONDAY, 2nd. *Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his, and he changeth the times and the seasons. Daniel 2. 20, 21.*

As surely as New Year's Morning follows Old Year's Night, each shall find that there is grace enough in heaven to transmute his January dream into a June reality.—F. W. Boreham.

TUESDAY, 3rd. *Still upward . . . . still upward . . . . still upward . . . . to the highest. Ezekiel 41. 7.*

Still upward in this coming year,
Thy path is all untried;
Still upward may'st thou journey on,
Close by thy Saviour's side!

Still upward till the day shall break,
And shadows all have flown;
Still upward till in heaven you wake,
And stand before the throne!

WEDNESDAY, 4th. *Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee: for thou art my God, thy spirit is good: lead me into the land of uprightness! Psalm 143. 10.*

I want to know thy guiding voice,
To walk with thee each day:
Dear Master, make me swift to hear
And ready to obey!
And thus the year I now begin
A happy year will be
If I am seeking just to do
The thing that pleaseth thee!
—Ethel Waring.

THURSDAY, 5th. *There we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight. Numbers 13. 33.*

If you stand on the mountain of faith and look down, things will seem easy to you; but if you are in the valley of doubt they will look like giants.—D. L. Moody.

FRIDAY, 6th. *The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord*

*is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27. 1.*

We are called unto trust. We are entitled to exult in the goodness and majesty of God. Ours is to be no depressing religion, but a religion of boundless joy. Our springs are not in ourselves. We dwell in the security of God's power, and as for wisdom, we ask and receive.—Joseph Parker.

SATURDAY, 7th. *He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much. Luke 16. 10.*

We make a mistake if we regard this faithfulness in that which is least as an elementary attainment. It is not a sort of first standard qualification fitting a novice for the second standard. I think the folks who are faithful in the least wear radiant crowns.—J. H. Jowett.

SUNDAY, 8th. *And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind! 1 Chronicles 28. 9.*

David's charge to Solomon is God's charge to us. God is looking for perfect hearts and willing minds today. Seek him, and find; forsake him, and lose his favor! —Thomas S. Stephens.

MONDAY, 9th. *Do you not see how nothing outside a man can defile him by entering him? It does not enter his heart, but his belly, and passes from that into the drain (thus he pronounced all food clean). Mark 7. 18, 19 (Moffatt).*

This is one of the revolutionary words of the Gospels. It laid down the principle that ritual ordinances are at best external, and do not affect the real issues of man's higher life.—E. F. Scott.

TUESDAY, 10th. *Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies. Psalm 60. 12.*

It brightens all our life to know that all is of the Lord, by the Lord, and to the Lord.—Moody Stuart.

WEDNESDAY, 11th. *Ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss. James 4. 3.*

Why are some prayers answered and some not? Because it is possible to pray badly. —A. W. Robinson.

THURSDAY, 12th. *Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on! Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Matthew 6. 25.*

When we see the lilies spinning
In distress,
Taking thought to manufacture
Loveliness:
When we see the birds all building
Barns for store,
'Twill be time for us to worry,—
Not before!
—Fay Inchfawn.

FRIDAY, 13th. *And as he entered unto a certain village there met him ten men that were lepers. Luke 17. 12.*

Another minute, and it would have been too late! But they were urgent, and as he entered they lifted up their voices and cried. Urgency is the first preparation for blessing.—C. A. Fox.

SATURDAY, 14th. *He maketh my feet like hind's feet, and setteth me upon my high places. Psalm 18. 33.*

Our feet have to do with our walk. Difficult as our surroundings may be, God can make us as sure-footed as the hind upon the high places.—F. W. Dodd.

SUNDAY, 15th. *Not every one that saith unto me "Lord, Lord!" shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Matthew 7. 21.*

The men who are hindering the coming of the kingdom today are not the men outside with open raucous blasphemy, but the men inside who hurrah for Jesus and applaud the kingdom, and say, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God," and all the while refuse his claim, his call, his ideal, by declining to submit their lives to him.—G. Campbell Morgan.

MONDAY, 16th. *The Lord bless thee and keep thee! Numbers 6. 24.*

The keeping power of God is a blessing that is applicable to every state of the Christian life. It applies to those who have got little, but it equally, or even more fully, applies to those who have got the greatest blessing.—J. Elder Cumming.

TUESDAY, 17th. *Though I have afflicted thee I will afflict thee no more. Nahum 1. 12.*

It is not hard for the Lord to turn night into day. He that sends the clouds can as easily clear the skies. Let us be of good cheer! It is better farther on. Let us sing Hallelujah by anticipation!—C. H. Spurgeon.

WEDNESDAY, 18th. *I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night! Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth! Isaiah 62. 6, 7.*

If ever there was a time when God's elect should cry day and night to him it is now. Will you not, dear reader, offer yourself to God for this blessed work of intercession, and learn to count it the highest privilege of your life to be a channel through whose prayers God's blessing can be brought down to earth?—Andrew Murray.

THURSDAY, 19th. *Many sorrows shall be to the wicked, but he that trusteth in the*

*Lord, mercy shall compass him about! Psalm 32. 10.*

God is not limited to one class of sorrow or penalty. The wicked man shall be mocked, tripped up, disappointed. He shall seize an egg, and find it a scorpion. God has set the universe against him.—Joseph Parker.

FRIDAY, 20th. *And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. Luke 22. 60.*

There was a message of high hope in it for Peter. Cockcrow is the herald of the day. Who can doubt that now, with all the bitter memories it awoke, it struck a chord of hope in Peter's heart? Sinner though he was, there was going to be another day for him.—George H. Morrison.

SATURDAY, 21st. *In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. Philippians 2. 15.*

A witness and reflector of the Sun of Righteousness should be ashamed to veil or hide his true character. The purpose of his existence is gone, if his light be hid.—Hubert Brooke.

SUNDAY, 22nd. *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect! Matthew 5. 48.*

It is bold enough to ascribe perfection to the invisible God, but to speak as if perfection was within the range of man is to startle us beyond measure. Only reverence restrains us from emphatic disbelief. This most extravagant demand is in reality a most exuberant gospel.—F. W. Norwood.

MONDAY, 23rd. *Salute Apelles, approved in Christ! Romans 16. 10.*

Nothing more is known of him than this. It is enough! The obscure, the unremembered may have Christ for their panegyrist. —W. L. Watkinson.

TUESDAY, 24th. *Arise and eat! 1 Kings 19. 5.*

Perhaps the prime duty of Christians today is to rise and eat,—to take the living bread that alone will bring fulness of life and fitness for service.—B. T. Badley.

WEDNESDAY, 25th. *This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will he heareth us. 1 John 5. 14.*

If we are wise, we train ourselves to be susceptible to the divine intimations. These can be turned into the most successful prayers.—A. W. Robinson.

THURSDAY, 26th. *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Ephesians 2. 10.*

My life is but a weaving
Between my God and me;
I see the seams, the tangles,—
The fair design sees he.
Then let me wait in patience
And blindness, satisfied
To make the pattern lovely
Upon the upper side!

FRIDAY, 27th. *He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. Proverbs 29. 1.*

Lapse of time does not cause crime to be forgotten or condoned. There is no statute of limitations with God!—W. L. Watkinson.

SATURDAY, 28th. *He abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself. 2 Timothy 2. 13.*

A man of faith is one who trusts God. A faithful man is one whom God can trust. —D. T.

SUNDAY, 29th. *If that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken . . . . Matthew 24, 48, 49.*

Here is one that is a servant,—an evil servant, it is true. He does not deny the fact that the Lord will come, but he puts it far ahead in the distant future, so that it can have no bearing on his present life. And I have observed that when a church or an individual assumes this attitude and puts the Lord's coming in the dim and distant future, the temptation is to dip into worldliness.—Robert V. Miller.

MONDAY, 30th. *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Psalm 91. 1.*

Here are three notes that would be heard over and over again. The note of seclusion —"He that dwelleth in the secret place." The note of durableness—"shall abide." The note of adjacency—"under the shadow of the Almighty."—F. W. Norwood.

TUESDAY, 31st. *Remember the word unto thy servant, on which thou hast caused me to hope! Psalm 119. 49.*

It is most prevalent pleading. It is a double argument. It is thy Word. Wilt thou not keep it? Why hast thou spoken it if thou wilt not make it good? Also, thou hast caused me to hope in it. Wilt thou disappoint the hope which thou hast thyself begotten in me?—C. H. Spurgeon.

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I find the **Record** most inspirational and helpful. It is exactly what I desire for my work and personal spiritual life. Thank you for all it means to me as a missionary here among Oriental people!—Vancouver, B. C.

I sincerely appreciate your paper, and always read it with great interest. It gives a broad vision of all denominations which I do not get elsewhere. Again I thank you for your continual courtesy in sending it.—Peking.

# Bible Notes for Daily Devotions

## Green Pastures and Waters of Rest.

Rev. F. B. Meyer, D. D., London.

### JANUARY, 1928

**Sunday, 1st. 1 Samuel 1. 1-18.**

This is a befitting beginning for our Scripture reading for the year!

Notwithstanding the laxity of the times, and when the sins of Eli's sons were making the worship of the central sanctuary at Shiloh abhorrent to the people (2. 17), there were pious families in all parts of the land that still maintained the Mosaic institutions, Deuteronomy 16. 16. We are sometimes rash in our judgment of a country because of the flagrant acts which flame out as from a Sodom, but let us never forget that there are thousands of unknown hearts and homes which are as salt and sweetness! "Yet have I left 7000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal." Throughout the Dark Ages there was always such a succession of holy souls, known as the "Quiet in the Land," who kept alive the sacred witness of the church. Whatever may be the religious condition of the age, some will be left to maintain the holy traditions of the great past. The fire never goes out on the altar.

Eli was too hasty in his judgments. We are all apt to these hasty conclusions, which break reeds already bruised and quench the spark which only with difficulty trembles in the smouldering flax. But how fine was Hannah's faith! Would that we could all learn from her the habit of finality in our dealings with God! She continued to press her request as though the divine Spirit challenged her to claim all and on the spot to receive the answer. When she had poured out her soul, the woman was "no more sad." She went her way, and even met her rival with a happy smile. It is not likely that she ever repeated her request, but from time to time she looked into God's face with child-like faith as much as to say:

"I know thou wilt not fail me!"

*We thank thee, Father, for the opening mercy of this New Year! We cast all our future on thy loving care, and go forth into the unknown as little children under their father's leadership. Grant us now a Father's blessing as we stand on the year's threshold and enter it with thee! In Christ's name.*

**Monday, 2nd. 1 Samuel 1. 19-28.**

"None that trust in him shall be desolate!" God, if we may put it so, cannot forget the quiet expectancy and reckoning of the holy soul. He remembers covenants made with him long years back, and honors the faith that dares to commit all such matters to his keeping. There are on record many instances of prenatal dedication. Read again Jeremiah 1. 1-10! The same has been proved true in an infinite number of cases. Women, note this!

But this initial stage must be followed up, as in Hannah's case, by the careful nurture and admonition of the Lord: Ephesians 6. 4; 2 Timothy 1. 5; 3. 15-17. During the early years of a child's life the mother must be prepared to renounce a large number of social and other activities and interests. I cannot remember one evening in my early boyhood that my mother did not spend the last half-hour with me. I see again that chintz-covered square sofa, and hear again her voice in the hymn, the Scripture, and the prayer. These were the pure fountains that rose from her heart in our home, and each child had its own. But what can mother or parents expect who leave their children to chance or to strangers at the sacred hour of evensong?

A noble woman in high position thus explained the purity and beauty of her four sons, grown to splendid manhood. She said that every night, when each had got to bed, she went from one to another, and in the dark heard from their lips the story of the previous hours. In this she seemed to extract the poison which from any source had entered, and which was replaced by her purity. Men should specially set themselves to be the companions of their boys about the age of 14, in open comradeship and unshadowed fellowship.

It was a magnificent act of self-surrender and faith when Hannah left her boy at Shiloh amid such surroundings, but faith makes no terms.

*We pray, O Lord, for the dear children, the lads and lassies of our homes, that we and all parents may have the grace and wisdom needed to prepare them to live clean and dedicated lives, which refuse the seductions that surround us on all sides!*

**Tuesday, 3rd. 1 Samuel 2. 1-11.**

From this marvelous outburst of a woman's overcharged heart we may learn much for our own help.

Let us dare to trust God, as Hannah did, in the darkest hours of life! We may be sure if we are quiet before God he will find

a way out. Our frequent mistake is that we go around to our friends and neighbors with our bitterness, and forget him. Hannah had poured out her soul before God, 1. 15, and God saved her. But before he can effectively succor us we must dare to avow, with her, that he alone is the rock of our help. Human resources, the girding of strength, the fulness of wealth and prestige, do not count with him. God's choicest instruments have not been the Peninnahs but the Hannahs.

The parallel between Hannah's song and the Magnificat of the mother of our Lord is close. Clearly this song was in Mary's heart when in her turn she praised God her Saviour, who had wrought such wonderful things for her.

Some of our songbirds have the plainest plumage. The hymns which have helped myriads have been, often enough, the utterance of simple-hearted women like Fanny Crosby.

For all women, whether richly endowed or not, Ruskin's words are true:

"It is of small moment that our womanhood should be trained to this knowledge or that, whether she knows many languages or one, whether she should be acquainted with science or not, but that she should have sympathy with suffering, should be within her own gates the inspiration of her husband and her sons, the center of order, the balm of sorrow, the fountain of love, able to heal, to redeem, to guide, and to guard."

*Grant us, O Christ, once more that noble type of womanhood from which our fathers sprang, pure and making pure; gentle and making strong; if simple in the knowledge of the world, then deeply taught in the science of love! Mercifully regenerate our homes and our society by renewing amongst us the purity and beauty of thine own mother!*

**Wednesday, 4th. 1 Samuel 2. 12-21.**

Through these earlier chapters the writer, like Rembrandt, strives to emphasize the contrast between Samuel's background and his peerless character. Compare 18-21 with 12-17; 26 with 22-25; 3. 1 with 27-36; and 3. 19-21 with 11-18.

How careful ministers and their helpers and supporters should be to give no cause of stumbling or rebuke, that the gospel be not blamed! Every act and word of a Christian ambassador is scrutinized by those who hate his message, in the hope that he may so commit himself as to excuse them for evading his appeals. More eyes are watching than we know.

A beautiful thought is suggested by the mother's care to make that little robe. We can imagine how she interwove her love with every stitch she put in. Not a stitch without prayerful and tender thought! The lad was growing, and every year the coat or ephod had to be bigger. How often Elkanah would be called in to see how it was progressing, and perhaps Peninnah was interested and gave a hint or two. But parents are always making these clothes for their children. What they say, and especially how they act, the tones of their voices, the conversations in the home or the street, their amusements and opinions are all woven into the mental, moral and spiritual clothing of their observant lads and girls.

Not only for children, but for those with whom we live in daily contact, this same process is at work. There is an invisible influence ever emanating from us, which is setting the fashion for friends, children, and employees. If we are living pure and holy lives we are setting a heavenly fashion. If we use ennobling and quickening speech it will create a wholesome atmosphere for our immediate circle of lovers and friends. As animals in the Arctic regions, and the butterflies and bird life of the Tropics, are affected in color by their habitat, so we may affect the whole society of which we form part. A sermon, a remark in a parlor, a fashion of conduct, may be "put on" and worn by others, as the apostle suggests in Colossians 3. 10-12.

*Help us so to live, we beseech thee, O Lord, that we may help others to put off what is unworthy and evil, and put on what is pure and noble in speech, behavior, and daily life! May the fashion of our own countenance and walk be used for the quickening and ennobling of the divine life in others!*

**Thursday, 5th. 1 Samuel 2. 22-36.**

This is one of the most scathing sentences on record. It is a leaf out of the judgment book. We read into it those terrible words, "the wrath of the Lamb." Nothing of this kind can emanate except from disappointed love: love that has borne long, love that would have blessed and saved, love that had done its best by warning, expostulation and entreaty, love that had suffered long in its infinite kindness, love that was prepared to go to all lengths. It is comparatively easy to encounter the wrath of injustice and implacable hatred, but there is no help for the soul which has sinned to the uttermost against love in tears.

The greater our gifts and opportunities, the more terrible will be our doom. It was because God had revealed himself to Eli's family from the days of the Egyptian captivity, had chosen them for high and sacred service, had made them his representatives, that his justice would cast them away as refuse.

The richer our enduements and opportunities, the greater our doom. One trembles to think of some of the so-called leaders and teachers of the present day who are seducing the people from the faith once delivered to

the saints, who are accepting emolument and prestige from the holy past which they betray, and who are misleading the souls committed to their charge. We use no harsh words, but weep in secret over the tragedy of their betrayal. Surely they are laying up for themselves wrath in the day of wrath!

Why is it that so often the children of God-fearing families drift away from the God of their fathers? Is it not because of the lack of discipline and definiteness in the home? In too many families there is a laxity in the maintenance of family religion and in attendance at God's house. A fine Sunday which tempts the whole family to make for the country, a wet day which suggests the electric stove and a new book, the presence of a friend or friends, these break up the holy habits of family religion, and relegate it to a second place. Also, children are too often addressed as if they were able to decide in all things for themselves, and fail to recognize, whilst young, the old stern word "obey."

*We pray thee, O gracious Spirit of God, that thou wouldst give us grace so to rule our families that they may be animated by one spirit, and filled with one purpose, to serve in thy holy fear, and to transmit the pure and holy traditions which we received from the sainted past! In Christ's name.*

**Friday, 6th. 1 Samuel 3. 1-10.**

All the ages have borne witness to the exquisite beauty of this picture. Its simplicity needs no further explanation or adornment. It would be impossible for poet or painter to increase the effectiveness of the appeal to the hearts of children, or to bring it up to date.

There is a province outside the scope of the intellect. It is God's summons to the heart of a child, into which the distinctions of our doctrines, catechisms and precepts have not as yet intruded. Myriads of children, of every nation and kindred and people and tongue, have run to and fro with their little bare feet across the sanctuary floor, to turn back at last to that voice which calls the lambs by name, and opens God's bosom for their reception.

Yet, if we must dogmatize, let it be said that the true shrine of religion is not in our head, or intellect, or reasoning faculty, but in our heart, which lies as a lakelet in the bosom of the mountains, reflecting the light and life of God. Sometimes we meet those who carry this child-heart through life. They live within the precincts of God's home, and like shells taken from the deep they seem to sing forever of ocean depths, untroubled by the storms of controversy which may be sweeping the surface. What a relief it is to get into some quiet church, where the elemental aspects of religion are presented in all simplicity, and the spirit is left free to tread those aisles and sit quietly in those hallowed pews where child-hearts through many generations have opened their deeps to God! Oh that we had the child-heart; that is not haughty, nor its eyes lofty; that is stilled and quieted as the weaned child which draws its sustenance from direct fellowship with him who said, "Come to me, for I am meek and lowly in heart!"

*Give us, O Spirit of God, the child-heart, the child-love, the child's simplicity! Let us be converted that we may become as little children, and so enter the kingdom of God! May we get beneath the superficiality and outwardness of the world's religion into the secret place of the Most High, where fellowship is too deep for speech! In Christ's name.*

**Saturday, 7th. 1 Samuel 3. 11-21.**

It was a terrible message with which the lad was entrusted. And we can well sympathize with the diffidence that led him to set about his ordinary duties rather than face the high priest. Generally he would have gone to the high priest's sleeping chamber, eager to be of service, but on that morning it was necessary for Eli to call him. But he had no option except to tell every whit.

May we not learn a lesson here? Are we sufficiently emphatic as to the inevitable destruction to individuals and communities that must result when impure relations are condoned between men and women, especially when they are the acknowledged leaders of society? As it was with Sodom and Gomorrah, with Pompeii and Herculaneum, and with Israel, so it must be with every nation. The license of the flesh inevitably leads to the overthrow of the state, and it is well that our young Samuels should be informed of this, and be warned to warn, saved to save.

It was a sensible and pious remark that Eli made when Samuel's message was completed, but it was altogether inadequate. Of course God will do what seems good to him under such circumstances, but he ought not to have been compelled to do it. Eli ought to have restrained his sons, and if necessary deposed them. He ought to have confessed that he had been gravely to blame. He should have humbled himself in broken-hearted sorrow because his supineness had landed his people in such a terrible plight.

What a beautiful description is this of the growing beauty of Samuel's character! Jehovah was with him as though there was unbroken fellowship. There were evidently times of revelation and commission when he was entrusted with messages which carried the divine endorsement. People realized that he was taught by the divine Spirit. The young prophet only spoke when he had a message, and his words therefore were carefully treasured. Oh, why should we not ask God to reveal himself as we take in hand his sacred Word?

*Oh give us Samuel's pure heart and his*

*willing mind, that we may take and keep the impress of heaven! Use us as thy messengers, but give us that tenderness of heart that shall yearn over the misled and sinful, and warn them even with tears! Oh forgive the past, and let us begin afresh to know and serve thee!*

**Sunday, 8th. 1 Samuel 4. 1-11.**

The Philistines may have feared the growing influence of Samuel. They were the aggressors, and from the first were successful. The real cause of the disaster is given in 7. 3, etc.

The first steps to restoring the national spirit ought to have been in a universal return to God. But instead of abolishing those evil shrines with their attendant abuses, and reëstablishing the true faith, they made a ceremonial use of the ark, as though it were a fetish. True, it had led the tribes through the desert, and been in the forefront of the march around Jericho, but then there was a divine presence which had made the ark the seat of the shechinah. Victory was sure not when the ark was there, but when it was the symbol of the presence of the Angel of the Covenant.

There is a profound lesson here! Men and women, when dying, or in great trouble, invoke the offices of the Christian church or the presence of the sacramental elements as though these outward symbols would necessarily involve the divine presence and intervention. But to do this is to expect from the emblems of religion results which can only come where there are repentance and faith. These outward emblems are in themselves useless unless the Lord Jesus is present. And if he is really present it is a question whether the outward emblem is necessary. The sacraments without the Saviour cannot save.

In the critical hour men will snatch at religion to help them, but how can they count on God's help when their lives have been self-centered and rebellious? Let us be more earnest than we have been in winning our friends and neighbors for God, that when their hour of peril and anguish comes they may have that happy confidence which we have in hours of extremity and heart-break! We are our brother's keeper. Why cannot we speak of God from our own experience?

*In all time of distress and pain help us, O Spirit of God, to find that very present help which they know who shelter under the wings of the shechinah! And may our experience encourage others to seek, if haply they may find! In Christ's name.*

**Monday, 9th. 1 Samuel 4. 12-22.**

This is one of the most touching scenes in the Old Testament. It may be also described as great literature. We can picture the intense anxiety of Shiloh, which for centuries had prided itself on the custodianship of the ark. Its presence, notwithstanding the evils connected with its priesthood, was a benediction, and seemed a safeguard by night and day. The people had been uneasy for its safety from the hour it was sent for by the army, and now the sense that a battle was being fought on which not their liberties alone but the fate of the ark depended filled every heart with emotion. What would be the result?

Finally, toward evening a breathless messenger rushed into the town with the fatal tidings: the army defeated, the two priests among the slain, the ark carried off! As the anguished murmurs spread they reached Eli's ears, and the news was broken to him somewhat hurriedly. He bore item after item till the last, and then his heart, unable to bear the strain, collapsed, and his death consummated the horrors of the day.

But even more pathetic was the decease of the wife of Phinehas. That her child was born could not solace her soul, since the ark was taken. In her heart was the passion of the patriot and the love of the saint.

Even her husband's death was not quoted as the final ingredient in the overflowing anguish of her soul.

"Canst thou rally thyself for the sake of thy child? Wilt thou not struggle to live for his nurture and care? Does not the nation need women like thee?"

"Nay, nay!" she says. "Let me die! There's nothing left to live for."

What a splendor shines through those dying words! Would that we were kindled to a similar anguish whenever any reverse overtakes our holy religion and the cause of Christ! We may well light our natures from the flames of this holy passion for God.

*We thank thee, O Spirit of inspiration, for preserving for us this cry of a broken heart! We long to be equally identified with the cross and cause of Christ, that our entire outlook on life may be affected by a similar passion. May Christ's love triumph, and his glory consume us! In his name.*

**Tuesday, 10th. 1 Samuel 5.**

The Philistines thought that to have the ark was to have become possessed of Israel's deity. They knew something of the wonderful work which Jehovah had wrought in the Exodus and the entrance to Canaan. They rightly attributed these achievements to the superior power of the Hebrews' God. To have his ark in their judgment meant the transference of his power from their hated enemies to themselves. Then they awoke to discover that Jehovah was no dumb idol, but a living and holy God, before whom the gods of the heathen must fall and their votaries must tremble. That was the inner significance of the events which were repeated in successive cities. There was a "deadly discomfiture" in each of the cities.

A nation, or church, or individual, may profess the name of God, but be without

him. In how many churches there may be the ark, i.e., the Christian hymn, the open Bible, and the profession of the creed, whilst the Spirit of God is absent! There is no shechinah, no voice speaking from the secret place, no sense of the awful holiness of Jehovah. The ark of the covenant, but no covenant! The open Bible but no light! The administration of the sacraments, but no vision! Let us see to it that as individuals we are not content to have the ark of an outward religion, and lose the Spirit of Christ!

Let us, also, learn this further lesson that the terrible acts of God's dealings with men are intended to awaken them to recognize his existence and authority! As we look back on the history of our race there are certain outstanding scenes which have left a permanent impression on men's minds. When God's judgments are on the earth, men learn his righteousness. Yes, there is a divine judge on the throne, and the Philistines must admit that they cannot face the consuming fire of his being.

*O thou who art a consuming fire, we do not fear thee with the fear of rebels, but with the reverent fear of thy sons and daughters! We know that thou hast accepted us in the Beloved, and that thou hast revealed thyself not on Sinai alone, but on Calvary. Let the fire of thy love burn out in us whatever is alien to thy will! In Christ's name.*

**Wednesday, 11th. 1 Samuel 6. 1-18.**

The old-world simplicity and beauty of this narrative are attractive. There is no need to look upon the mysterious impulse of the cattle as being an extraordinary and unprecedented one. As an invisible direction led these kine, contrary to nature, to follow the road to Bethshemesh, are we not all aware of impulses that have a similar effect on ourselves? Take, for instance, the impulse that leads some young man or woman to resolve to leave behind the ties and amenities of home and go to China or Tibet as a missionary of the cross! They are not indifferent to the dear home ties, but they hear another voice, and feel the pressure of another hand.

Of course it is necessary to test the impulses which come to us. When the first symptom arises we must not rush around to friend or acquaintance to tell them and ask their opinion. That is a sign that the impulse is not a profound or divine one. There is an element of the self-life in the impulsive advertising of one's inmost convictions which demonstrates their natural origin.

The soul at first listens to the inward voice speaking in the depth of the soul, and stands in reverent awe. It is too sacred to discuss. Presently that voice becomes corroborated by an outward sign, an appeal, a remark, a letter. Then the advice of some holy servant of God. So the matter becomes increasingly clear.

Is it not, also, the frequent experience of those whose life is hid with Christ in God that they are conscious of divine promptings? The steps of good men are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in and opens their way.

*Order our footsteps in thy way, O our Father, that we may perpetually hear thy voice saying, This is the way, walk ye in it! May we not lean to our own understanding, but in all our ways acknowledge thee! In Christ's name.*

**Thursday, 12th. 1 Samuel 6. 19 to 7. 7.**

There is evidently a mistake in these numbers, which need not be wondered at when we remember that a slight mark or dash would represent a 1000. Bethshemesh was a small village, and the probable reading, as suggested by Josephus, is that 70 men died out of 1400.

Twenty weary years passed. Probably the fact that Jehovah had allowed the ark to be taken had extinguished the last lingering spark of reverence for the Tabernacle. The oppression of the Philistines became more and more intolerable. For 20 years Samuel, though not much more than 25 or 30 years of age at the start, pursued his earnest ministry, itinerating among the people and urging that Israel should turn away from idols, and especially from the lascivious rites of Ashtaroth, the Venus of the old world. His call to repentance and faith that there should be a national return to Jehovah was at last successful, the old national spirit arose, the idol-worship with its impure excesses was abolished, and Jehovah was once more the enthroned God of his people. What an extraordinary result may follow from the devoted labors of one man!

This pouring out of water was significant. It symbolized the pouring out of hearts which were deeply penitent and had nought but tears and confessions. "Ye people," said a later voice, "pour out your hearts before him!" It is well worth while to turn to Psalms 42. 4; 62. 8; Lamentations 2. 19; and perhaps Samuel had heard of his mother's prayer, recorded in 1 Samuel 1. 15.

The Philistines know at once that when confession has had its way God's grace and strength will flow in to fill the vacuum.

*Help us, O Lord, to pour out our hearts before thee! May we get rid of all that grieves thy Holy Spirit, and may we be filled out of thy fulness!*

**Friday, 13th. 1 Samuel 7. 8-17.**

The tidings of that great convention at Mizpah aroused the Philistines to take action. They discerned in it the awakening of a new spirit in Israel, and took measures to crush it by a sudden invasion. So sudden was it that they broke on the assembled tribes in the midst of their great revival gathering. Unprepared for resistance, they

cried to Jehovah for his interposition, and Samuel's prayers were answered by such a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning that the Philistines became disorganized and fled. Then the Israelites, recognizing the hand of God, rushed down upon the foe, and their rout was so complete as to secure peace and independence for 20 years, as well as the restitution of usurped territory. A huge stone pillar was erected as a monument of the victory, and the word Ebenezer was probably engraven on its face.

As we review our lives we can see many Ebenezer-stones, where the right hand of God has not only helped but saved us. Some may even shudder as they review the precipices on the edge of which they stood, the narrow escapes they experienced, and the enemies that plotted their downfall. If ever we are allowed in heaven to review our lives and to know all that was covered by the two last petitions of the Lord's Prayer, we shall better understand why he taught us to ask not to be led into temptation and to be delivered from evil.

Notice that expression "the hand of the Lord," which was against the Philistines. It was also a favorite phrase with that eminent servant of God Ezra: see Ezra 7. 6, 9, 28; 8. 18, 22, 31! Let us seek its coöperation and rely on its help! For us it is a pierced hand, but it is a strong hand. If only day by day we realized that what our weak hands fail to accomplish may be intrusted to his coöperation, we should learn, as Jacob taught of old, that our hands may be made strong by the hands of the mighty one of Jacob, Genesis 49. 24.

*Gracious Father, be our rock of defence in the hour of temptation, and our strength in the day of battle, that we may be more than conquerors: and let thy mighty hand make occasions for Ebenezer-stones as needed in our daily experience! In Christ's name.*

**Saturday, 14th. 1 Samuel 8.**

Samuel was now 54 years of age. Unable to cover more than a limited area of the country, he appointed his sons to administer the southern part from Beersheba. They failed to inherit his high qualities, but corrupted the fountains of justice; and their action induced a revolution. The memory of the spasmodic rule of the judges led to a widespread desire for a united form of government, and the risk of Samuel's death precipitated the demand for a king.

For us there is a profound lesson in the intimacy between God and his faithful servant. In verse 6 he communicates the national request to God. Jehoyah answers him, and gives specific directions. He passes on to the people the divine decisions. He rehearses to God the attitude of the national leaders, and receives definite instructions as to his own action (21, 22).

This interchange of thought and plan between Samuel and Jehovah is most instructive. Is there enough of this interchange of speech, this waiting on God, in our own lives? Too often we formulate our own policy and proceed to fulfil it, asking God to bless it without waiting for his judgment as to its wisdom or expediency. We must aim at more of this holy interchange of confidence! That we should suggest our policy is in keeping with his gift of reason, but the winnowing of that policy must be left with him before we act.

We often find it hard to appreciate that God really longs and waits for us to assume the attitude of sons and daughters who are threading the maze of life and need his guidance at every turn. In earthly relationships the son or daughter away from home carefully seeks the advice of mother or father: why should we not seek God's? The Father of lights is waiting to give liberally and without upbraiding of his wisdom to those who lack, James 1. 5.

*Give us the child's faith, O Spirit of love and faith, that we may hold daily converse with our heavenly Father with a confidence that never falters! May we roll our burdens on the Lord, and wait for him to unravel the tangled skeins of our perplexities! In Christ's name.*

**Sunday, 15th. 1 Samuel 9. 1-14.**

Kish, Saul's father, was a man of great wealth and substance. His son was almost 7 feet high, of gigantic stature and athletic build.

According to Eastern custom, much of the country being unoccupied, the animals during the grazing season were allowed to roam at large. After a fruitless search Saul and his servant found themselves near Samuel's home. It is interesting to notice that though the Tabernacle had lost the ark, and therefore the sacrificial system had been arrested, sacrifices were still offered according to the ancient custom for families and individuals whenever it was possible to secure the presence of a holy man, 13. Men cannot live without God.

The search for those asses led to the steps of the throne. The incident was so used by the Spirit of God. So exactly was everything arranged and timed that the two young men came suddenly face to face with Samuel. He seems to have been dressed as an ordinary man, and without a retinue of attendants.

There are no chances in life. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father. When necessary, God's providence in answer to prayer will bring to us the one person of all others that can help us. On the other hand, our earnest hope that we should meet this or that individual often remains ungranted. In each case God has his sufficient reasons.

Samuel on his side had only a general

knowledge that he would be meeting Saul, but he went forth to meet the ordinary incidents of the day knowing that God would direct his steps.

*Teach us, O God, the way in which we should walk, for we lift up our hearts unto thee! We will fulfil our ordinary business, and thou knowest where to find us. We leave with thee to choose the moments on which the great issues of life depend. In Christ's name.*

**Monday, 16th. 1 Samuel 9. 15-27.**

Again we encounter one of those familiar colloquies between Jehovah and his servant, forecasting the event of the morrow and designating Saul as king. All had been arranged with unerring precision. There was opportunity for unveiling to Saul the divine summons, and for the reverent recognition of that summons by the thirty guests. The housetop converse must have completed the revelation of the divine plan to the amazed listener, whose astonishment spoke in verse 21.

We must really, always, and entirely be ready to do what our Lord appoints. His appointments can never, in the issue, be disappointments. The one secret of life is not to devise or plan, but to fall in with whatever the eternal will intends for us. If only men and women would consent for their Maker to handle them as clay, if only they would yield themselves to every pressure of his hand, even when it involves pain, there would arise a peace that passes understanding, and a quiet heroism that would defy circumstances and triumph over them.

As Saul lay that night on the housetop, recalling the events of the day and the marvelous opportunities suddenly unfolded by Samuel, is it likely that he slept? Did he not feel the awe of the hour? Did he not lift his soul to God for wisdom and guidance? Did he not plan great and noble deeds? It is a memorable moment in life when we feel chosen by God's Spirit for some high endeavor, when we learn that God calls us to be his trustees and fellow workers, when we realize that we are entrusted with the destinies of others, and a glorious future looms in sight. But alas for Saul, he got out of touch with God, and died by his own hand!

*Merciful Father, who hast called us with a great calling, may we never fail thee or abuse thy trust! Teach us thy will and plan, and may we walk humbly with thee to the end, ever faithful to thy high calling and never numbered among the castaways! In Christ's name.*

**Tuesday, 17th. 1 Samuel 10. 1-13.**

Saul's anointing at early dawn which designated him as king and Samuel's kiss of loyalty must have left him almost bewildered, and it was as necessary as wise to corroborate the amazing transactions of that day by a series of circumstances. When we are on God's path, sometimes a lonely one, it is an immense assurance to have corroborations that tell us we are right.

"The asses were found." This indicated that henceforth he was relieved of the home ties. The gifts of the three men gave an assurance that there would be no lack of supplies to sustain him in his new career. The band of young men awoke new chords to vibrate in his heart, and the spirit of a new life seemed to descend on him. But alas, it did not become a permanent possession! It is possible, we learn from Hebrews 6, to be enlightened and to be a partaker of the Holy Spirit, to come temporarily under the power of the world to come, and yet to fall away!

But what to Saul was only a transient and passing impression may become in each of us a permanent possession. The gift of Pentecost abode on the early church, and whenever God calls us to special service he will provide a special and abiding anointing of the Spirit.

Before Samuel dismissed his guest he bade him act as occasion served. There is always room for sanctified commonsense. God may arrange the circumstances, but we may make them stepping-stones or stumbling-blocks. The divine guidance of our lives does not obviate the necessity for prudence. May we ever remember our Lord's own words, "My judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will, but his that sent me"!

*Teach us, O Lord, the way in which we should walk, especially when we are taking a forward step for thy kingdom and glory! Grant us corroborating circumstances, and may we hear the voice behind us saying, "This is the way: walk ye in it!"*

**Wednesday, 18th. 1 Samuel 10. 14-27.**

In this final scene of Saul's anointing we must stay to acknowledge the nobility of the two principal actors. It has been truly remarked by Ewald that Samuel is one of the few great men in history who in critical times by sheer force of character and inimitable energy terminate a great existing system, at first against their own will, but afterwards when convinced of the necessity they carry the revolution to a happy issue. By all the force and eagerness of their nature they initiate a better form at the cost of much personal suffering.

There are times in all great lives when men are called upon to open the way which ultimately results in their own deposition. At such times remember Samuel's heroism, and care for the flock over which God has made you overseers more than you care for yourselves!

Saul was presently called on to win a victory over Nahash; but previously for him also there was an inner fight against himself and over himself which probably meant more than he or others realized. These two con-

flicts always concur. If a man conquers within he will conquer without; if he fails within he will fail without. It is in proportion as we overcome our heart enemies that we shall overcome our Ammonites.

Saul had a threefold fight. (1) Against the subtle temptation of pride. When the lot finally fell out with his name he was not to be found; and it was only when the Urim was again referred to that he was discovered hiding among the baggage-wagons. (2) He overcame the temptation to vindictiveness against those who opposed his nomination. "He held his peace." (3) In spite of every temptation to ostentation he returned to his farm, and for a whole month drove the oxen across the land. Ask of the Holy Spirit grace to be equally simple!

*Grant to us, holy Father, we pray thee, grace that we may walk so closely and humbly with thee that when Satan comes to tempt us he may find no response in our hearts! May thy glory be our all-consuming passion! In Christ's name.*

**Thursday, 19th. 1 Samuel 11.**

Across the Jordan in the land of Gilead the city of Jabesh-gilead was hard-pressed by the Ammonites, who had recovered from the defeat inflicted by Jephthah. There was a blood tie between the beleaguered city and Gibeah, Judges 21. 12, and in this awful hour they claimed their special help. But it seemed impossible in so short time to effect deliverance. But evidently a new spirit was at work. "God's Spirit came mightily on Saul," 6. "The dread of Jehovah fell on the people," 7. "The Lord wrought deliverance in Israel," 13.

The royal summons was obeyed throughout the entire land. 130,000 men rallied to the royal standard, and on the morning of the day which had been fixed for surrender the enemy was so completely routed that no two were left together. It was a wonderful victory and made an auspicious inauguration of the new reign.

Would to God that there might be a confederation of the various churches as there was of the various tribes of Israel, for a concerted attack on the leagued forces of the world, the flesh and the devil! The sin of our great cities is appalling.

What living encouragement is suggested in our own conflicts with Satan! Sometimes we are reduced almost to despair. Shall we ever be able to withstand? Again and again we have met the foes of our peace, only to be repulsed. Our hopes have been dashed to the ground and our banners rolled in blood. Yet take heart! At the place where you have fallen you shall stand, for Christ comes to your defence. He is able to make you more than a conqueror. The Spirit of God shall come mightily on you, and the Lord will work a great salvation.

*Grant unto us, O Lord, thy succoring help, that we may be delivered in the dark hour when Satan and our indwelling evil nature seem to combine to our overthrow! In thee and thy cross and by thy Spirit we shall conquer, for thou art our almighty helper!*

**Friday, 20th. 1 Samuel 12. 1-15.**

The whole land was ringing with Saul's exploit in delivering Jabesh-gilead, and this seemed an auspicious moment to Samuel for confirming him in the kingdom. He also took the opportunity of reviewing his own administration. His hands at least were clean.

The old man was rewarded and comforted by the unanimous shout which ratified his long and pure stewardship. Happy is the nation whose public men can challenge a similar verdict, because they have made no profit out of their long service to the commonwealth!

But Samuel went further, and took the opportunity to show the assembled tribes where they had done wrong. First, he reminded them of the many occasions in which God had succored their fathers, 7-11; and then he insisted that now they had substituted a monarchy for a theocracy they would be as liable as before to the same punishments as previously if they turned to Baalim and Ashtaroth. He made it clear that no change in their method of government would avail them if they failed in allegiance to Jehovah.

May we not apply the same to our various church systems? The world is full of various "isms." Some suit one temperament, and some another. But the supreme question is the attitude of the churches to Christ. Which sets him forth most clearly? Which gives glory to his deity, and worships him with the purest devotion? Which is closest in kinship to the apostolic creed and testimony? As in the kingdom of Israel, so in the church, the one test and criterion is the divine leadership. What we need is not so much the polished and erudite sermon, or the superb choir, or the elegant crowd, but Christ as Alpha and Omega, First and Last!

*Lord Jesus, we worship thee with loving homage and faith! Thou art all and in all to us. Whom have we in heaven but thee, and on earth there is none like thee! Thou art the strength of our heart, and our portion for ever!*

**Saturday, 21st. 1 Samuel 12. 16-25.**

Having handed over his office to Saul, and having reminded the nation of their failures, Samuel went on to say with inimitable sweetness that the Lord would not forsake his people, for his great name's sake.

God cannot forsake you as an individual. It has pleased him to make you his child, but if he now cast you away would he not expose himself to the charge of fickleness? If he had chosen us because of our goodness or beauty he might have just reason to dis-

card us if these qualities became defaced. But since he made us his by his own adoption and grace, he can hardly cast us away now. Were he to fail us now there would be a charge against his love, against his power, and against the immutability of his wisdom.

Neither can God forsake the world. It reeks with blasphemy, tyranny, and sin. It has been saturated with the blood of his Son, and of myriads of his saints. It has been bedewed with the tears of holy men and women, and by their prayers. But God cannot cast it aside. That would proclaim to all the universe the failure of his grace and power. Yes, some day we shall see her glistening in the light that shone over Paradise, and enswathed in an unpolluted atmosphere! The populations of the world will walk in the joy of emancipation from the blight entailed through Adam's sin. The kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ. Cannot you catch the first herald notes of that Hallelujah Chorus, as the voice of many waters and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, "Hallelujah, for the Lord our God, the almighty, reigneth!"

*We praise thee, heavenly Father, for the immutability of thy purpose! Thou canst not, and wilt not, forget or forsake. We are not worthy to be called thy sons and daughters, but we cast ourselves on thy love, which will never let us go. In Jesus Christ our Lord.*

**Sunday, 22nd. 1 Samuel 13. 1-14.**

This chapter is the story of a great tragedy. The people of Israel were in a great strait before an overwhelming Philistine invasion. They hid themselves in dens and caves, and some even passed over Jordan. Day by day Saul's army dwindled. In 1 Samuel 10. 8 Samuel had made it clear that he was to act as God's vice-gerent, receiving his marching orders from the prophet's lips, but when Samuel's advent was delayed he took on himself to offer the burnt-offering. In that act he proved that he was not a man after God's own heart. He was not prepared to risk everything rather than disobey.

Such tests still come to us all. We are so feverish, so hasty, so fearful, that we act on our own impulse instead of waiting for the clear guidance and opening of God's providence.

The man who is after God's own heart will wait for God to the last moment, and obey to the letter; will dare to stand amid a dwindling human force, because he has not received the signal for action. Man becomes so impatient, and forgets that God's going-forth is as sure as the morning, and that he will come at the destined moment.

In answer to Saul's excuse Samuel spoke of the lad, known only to himself, who was growing up in Jesse's home, and who would perform all his will. Listen to what that lad said when he had come to years: "I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up out of an horrible pit, and set my feet upon a rock, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God!"

Wait for God! Stand still and see his salvation! Samuel is on his way, and he will not be one moment too late.

*Lay thine hand, O Lord, on these throbbing hearts of ours, and still their feverish beating! We will trust, and not be afraid. Thou art good to them that wait for thee. It is good, therefore, that a man should hope and quietly wait for thy salvation.*

**Monday, 23rd. 1 Samuel 13. 15-23.**

From the Jordan valley, and running due West, a valley leads up at right angles into the heart of the country, the cliffs approaching one another from either side. The Philistines were encamped on the northerly side, and Saul's dwindling force, now reduced to 600 men, on the southerly. So severe had been the Philistine oppression that his followers had forfeited all their weapons of war, and were reduced to such rude weapons as clubs and goads.

Jonathan chafed at this inaction and disgrace which darkly brooded over his fellow countrymen. It seemed to him impossible to suppose that God had so utterly forsaken the people of his choice. Had he promised, and could he not perform? Was not the land of Canaan made over to them by an irrevocable deed of gift? Surely God was only waiting for some one to act in faith on the divine assurance! Saul, on the other hand, had no perception of these things. Perhaps he was smitten already by that fatal failure of soul which developed into mania. The sentence of deposition, recently pronounced by Samuel, lay like a stone on the mouth of a tomb, and shut him up to despair. He seemed to have neither the will nor the power to arouse himself to claim God's gracious help.

Is not there a warning here to us all? The evils under which modern society is groaning are terrible. The corruption of morals, the uncertainty in the administration of justice, the widespread system of bribes, the desertion of God's house, the love of pleasure, these are the Philistines of our life, and they seem all-powerful. The church of God also appears to have lost or forfeited its ancient power, the power that once stopped the gladiatorial combats and martyrdoms of the Coliseum. We need another Jonathan to arise!

*O Lord our God, stir up thy might, and come amongst us, and succor us! Arouse in our hearts the high courage and faith of our ancestors, that we may never rest in the face of high-handed wrong, but stand, even it be alone, as thy witnesses! In Christ's name.*

**Tuesday, 24th. 1 Samuel 14. 1-16.**

God always works through human means. The divine tides flow through human channels. He is ever on the outlook for those who will receive his power and grace on the one hand, and transmit them on the other. Jonathan had the smallest possible faith in himself, and the greatest faith in God. There was no restraint on God's side, and there should be none on his. He only aspired to be the humble instrument through whom God could work.

As they ascended the steep cliffside the young men agreed on the sign which would indicate that they were in the line of God's will. This was graciously granted in the mocking voices that ridiculed the idea that the Hebrews were to be feared. The soul that reckons on God cannot be ashamed. When they reached the summit twenty men measured their length on the ground, and a panic spread back to the main army, which on a sudden began to melt away.

Yield yourselves to God, and I specially address the young men who may read these words! There are wrongs that God wants to right, tyrannies he is determined to break, foes of human peace and happiness that he wants to quell. He must have agents and instruments, clean and pure, true and faithful, delivered from the domination of the flesh, and resigned to his disposal. It matters not whether they be high-born as Jonathan, or obscure as his armorbearer: through them he will achieve deliverance.

*Use me, O Lord, I beseech thee, as a humble instrument for the achievement of thy gracious purposes, that thy name may be hallowed, thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as in heaven!*

**Wednesday, 25th. 1 Samuel 14. 17-37.**

The Philistines fled in wild precipitancy. In the panic each man thought his neighbor was his foe. The Hebrews who had hidden came forth from their hidingplaces, and followed the flying host. And Saul, as he looked out from Gibeah, was amazed to see the enemy melting away. Without delay he followed the flying foe with all his available forces, and thousands of the dreaded Philistine host dyed the valleys with their heart's blood.

Saul's unwise prohibition against taking food had a terrible sequel in the exhaustion of his troops and in their famished flying on the food without separating the blood. Thus, when the evening fell, the divine oracle was dumb. Some sin had silenced it. If he had been sincere Saul would have found it in his own heart rather than in any that stood around. We are reminded of those awful final words in 28. 6, "The Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets."

"If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear my prayer." Whenever we kneel in prayer it is well to ask ourselves if there is any sin which needs to be confessed, forgiven, and put away. God does not withhold himself for a moment from the soul that seeks him in penitence and faith, and if he hides his face, and we cannot obtain access into his presence chamber, we do well to revert to the scenes of the previous hours to ascertain the cause. He bids us come out from the rest of men without touching the unclean thing, and he will receive us. If, then, we are aware of the door being shut against us we should search and try our ways, and ask the Holy Spirit to indicate whatever obstructs the vision or robs the soul of the face to face interview.

*Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, we beseech thee, O Lord, that we may see if there be any wicked way in us, or any sin which is harbored and not cleansed, that with a pure heart we may worship before thee and receive thy benediction!*

**Thursday, 26th. 1 Samuel 14. 38-52.**

That there was divine displeasure was obvious, but the blame was not on Jonathan, but because Saul had given way to jealousy, sullenness of temper, and a morose disposition. He knew that he was out of touch with God. He knew that the dawn of his early life was overcast. He knew that this victory had been won in spite of himself. The eating or not-eating of honey did not count. The one thing that did count was himself. He had not wrought with God, though Jonathan had done so. They two were discovered by lot, but his son was not the cause of God's silence.

Note the truth of the popular verdict, that Jonathan had wrought with God! Let us ask ourselves whether the same might be said of our own activities! We are full of business, we are notorious for planning and achieving, we think we are realizing great results, but perhaps all that we do is being weighed in the balances of eternity and found to be wanting. Now let us consider what is needful before we can be said to be God's fellow workers, as Paul was able to say of himself in 1 Corinthians 3. 9!

In order to realize this weal we must be entirely absorbed in seeking the honor and glory of God; there must be no selfness in our aim or purpose; we must adopt methods that God would approve; we must await his signal for action or speech; we must realize that neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God who giveth the increase. Consecration must separate us from every known sin, and lay all on God's altar as a perpetual sacrifice; and faith must leave all in God's hands, accepting wisdom, goodness, and strength from him.

*We confess, O heavenly Father, that too often we have wrought for our own glory, and in our own strength! Henceforth may we have no purpose but thy glory, no reliance save on thy might, no guidance but from thy Spirit! In Christ's name.*

**Friday, 27th. 1 Samuel 15. 1-9.**

This command to smite Amalek was evidently given after several years had elapsed, which are covered by the closing verses of the previous chapter. The kingdom, inaugurated under adverse conditions, was now able to vie with the neighboring nations. It was at this time that the supreme test entered Saul's life.

If of late your life has become more easy and opulent, if paths once difficult have become smooth and easy, be on your guard, for God may ask of you some service that will test you to the uttermost! Watch and pray!

The divine summons involved the absolute extermination of the Amalekites. And here let us recall the findings of an eminent physician who has made a special study of those ancient peoples, and has come to the conclusion that the sins practised by them were of so terrible and virulent a nature that the existence of mankind would have been imperiled if they had been allowed to exist. Doubtless this was the reason why divine justice and pity summoned Saul to this Amalekite extirpation. Even in this world God sets up his judgment seat. Nineveh stood before the bar of God, and Babylon, and Rome. Perhaps our modern civilization is at the same bar. What if God should pronounce the same sentence as confronted Belshazzar and his lords, "Weighed in the balances, found wanting"?

Saul obeyed the divine command with the notable exception mentioned in verse 9. Are we not all tempted to a similar reservation of the choicest and best? We are prepared to obey the divine voice up to a certain point, and there to stay. If Amalek, sprung from Esau, stands for the flesh, sparing him may in our case be equivalent to sparing some self-indulgence, propensity, or secret sin. These we condone. "Christ may have every thing but that!"

*Search us, O God, and know our hearts, try us and know our thoughts, see if there be any wicked way in us, and lead us in thy everlasting way! Help us to surrender all, and not keep back part! In Christ's name.*

**Saturday, 28th. 1 Samuel 15. 10-21.**

The revelation of Saul's failure was made to Samuel at night. God came near to him with the grievous unveiling of the duplicity practised by king and people. His soul was deeply stirred, and he cried unto the Lord all night.

How much we owe to him who ever lives to intercede for us before the throne, and to dear human friends who, when they discover marks of deterioration in us, take no rest, and give God no rest, till our souls are restored!

But Samuel was not content only to pray: he traveled 15 miles to find Saul, where a remarkable conversation ensued. Saul protested that he had fulfilled the divine commission, prefacing his declaration with the unctuous phrase, "Blessed be thou of the Lord!" At that moment the sheep began to bleat and the oxen to low. With sad irony the prophet asked what those sounds meant, and the king replied by laying the blame on the people. Then Samuel went slowly over the past, to the hour when they stood together in the dawn, and he had anointed and kissed him in token of his loyalty. He put aside all thought of the people and dealt exclusively with the royal sinner, who certainly could have stayed them had he chosen.

When we stand before God no excuse will avail us. All things are naked and open before him with whom we have to do. Let us never attempt to hide or cloak our sins in his sight, but confess them with a lowly and contrite heart, so that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, through the blood of the cross and the intercession of the throne! Our high priest is merciful and faithful: let us trust ourselves in his hands!

*We have sinned, most gracious Father, not only in what we have done, but in what we have failed to do! Forgive us, we pray thee, according to thine infinite goodness and mercy, and restore to us the joy of thy salvation! So help us in all future hours by thy grace that we may perform thy will in all its demands, and at whatever cost! In Christ's name.*

**Sunday, 29th. 1 Samuel 15. 22-35.**

Samuel's answer to Saul's evasions is one of the greatest sentences in the Bible. It was repeated by subsequent prophets and quoted by our Lord himself, Mark 12. 33. Tearing the veil aside, Samuel showed the enormity of the sin Saul had committed. Rebellion was equally sinful as witchcraft, and stubborn obstinacy as idolatry. Finally, with the majesty of God's representative, the prophet announced the sentence of deposition.

Should we not, at the great crises of our life, carefully scrutinize our conduct lest we should prove to be castaways?

Saul immediately recognized the precipice on the brink of which he stood. But his cry was not that of the penitent, but of the king who desired at all costs to retain his position. The prophet recognized his attitude, and saw that he was deceiving him with the use of words which savored of penitence, but were really a further bid for the retention of his position. In the extremity of his anguish he seems to have sprung forward and seized the collar of the prophet's cloak as he was about to leave him. It tore in his agonized grasp, an apt emblem of his own forfeited position. To save his face the prophet stayed with him, and they knelt side by side in prayer, but what a contrast! Finally Samuel completed the task delegated to Saul by the execution of Agag.

Since Amalek in Scriptural typology stands for the flesh, was not this an anticipation of Galatians 5. 16-24?

*Grant us grace, O Holy Spirit, that we may fulfil God's purpose perfectly, on whatsoever errand he may send us! Above all, may we be enabled to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, that having died to self we may live to God! In Christ's name.*

**Monday, 30th. 1 Samuel 16. 1-13.**

It is touching to read of Samuel's anguish at Saul's failure. Oh that we had more of this spirit, that we may not be content with denouncing sin, but shed tears of true pity for the sinner! "When Jesus beheld the city (and its impending doom) he wept over it." But the prophet's tears and prayers could not avail. There are awful moments in the sinner's life when God's Spirit seems to renounce all hope of saving.

Whilst the sacrificial feast was being prepared the prophet went to Jesse's home, and his sons passed before him; but none of them met the divine standard until the youngest was summoned. In David a new era stood before the prophet, the inauguration of a better time, the keystone and the great fabric of the Hebrew monarchy and of the devout life. Above all, the man whom God loved! With that anointing came a further inflow of the Holy Spirit into that pure young heart to equip him to be the sweet singer of Israel, the shepherd of God's flock, the inaugurator of Solomon's Temple, and the progenitor of the Messiah.

Oh that on every reader of these lines the unction of the Holy One might descend, as we are taught to expect from 1 John 2. 27! Surely if we bare our heart to God we may claim our share in the great gift of Pentecost. Let us open our whole nature to the inbreathing of the Holy Spirit for character, and for a more intimate knowledge of Christ, and that we may be anointed for service!

*We thank thee, O blessed Lord, that in thine ascension thou didst receive the fulness of the Holy Spirit; and that the promise is for us whom God has called to his service! Anoint us afresh, we humbly beseech thee! May we be renewed in the spirit of our mind!*

**Tuesday, 31st. 1 Samuel 16. 14-23.**

When we are told that "an evil spirit from the Lord" troubled Saul we must remember that in the strong Hebrew idiom the Almighty is sometimes said to do what he permits to be done. God cannot be tempted of evil, neither does he tempt any man, but he allows us to be tempted, Job 1. 6-12; Luke 22. 31. Remember to distinguish in your thinking between God's permissions and his appointments! Also remember that temptation is not sin! Saul had definitely refused the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, and there was nothing left to resist the intrusion of the evil suggestions and depressed melancholy to which his nature lay open. In the solemn words thrice repeated in Romans 1, God gave him up to a reprobate mind.

Robert Browning's poem on David's singing before Saul must occur to every thoughtful reader of this narrative. He suggests the various scenes that the young psalmist commemorated in his songs, drawn from flocks, and mountain streams, and the landscape, all of them appealing to the king's earlier and happier manhood, in the hope of recalling him to his earlier and happier self. It was as though the skilful touch of those fingers sought to recall the early scenes of young manhood before the spirit had made its fatal and final choice.

May we not apply this thought to our use of David's psalms? They should be our constant study. We should bathe our jaded souls in their music, which sets forth heavenly mysteries in the language of the sheepfold, the rivers that make glad, the mountains that are emblems of God's righteousness, and the heavens that declare his mighty works.

*We pray thee, gracious Spirit, so to bring to our remembrance and help the green pastures and still waters of the Psalms that we may be calmed, quieted, rested, and inspired amid the strain of toil and the pressure of care! In Christ's name.*

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**Paradox of Religion (The),** by Willard F. Sperry. Macmillan Co., New York. 63 pages. $1.

This little book is a thin one, but it is deep. It consists of the Hibbert Lectures delivered in England by the distinguished dean of the Divinity School of Harvard University. They are only two in number, and neither of them is long, but they are full of wisdom, and not only touch but enter into depths that challenge our best endeavors in thinking.

The subject of the first is "What Religion Is," and of the second, "What Religion Does." The latter is especially profitable. —W. O. S.

**Religions Past and Present,** by Bertram C. A. Windle. Century Co., New York. 308 pages. $3.

A general interest in comparative religion is indicated by the fact that such a book as this is among the best sellers. It is popular in its appeal, having as background a course of lectures given under the auspices of the University of Toronto. The treatment is not too academic, yet well above the tabloid manner.

The writer, who is a Romanist, admits a firm and definite belief in Christianity not only as the supreme religion, but as the revelation of God. The concluding chapter deals with present day Christian faith. There are 23 chapters, which survey a wide field regarding primitive ideas of God, the origin of religion, symbols and practices like fetishism, mythology and astrology, some of the pagan religions, and sketches of Buddha, Confucius, Lao Tze, and the monotheistic religions.—T. C.

# OUR BOOK TABLE

*READ AT LEAST ONE RELIGIOUS BOOK A MONTH, BESIDE THE BIBLE!*

## JOHN BUNYAN BIBLIOGRAPHY.

In answer to inquiries and after a search of the New York Public Library we find that the following books are published in this country, and are in print.

### American Tract Society, New York.

**Pilgrim's Progress.** 55 cents.

**Do.,** quarto size, 127 engravings, with life of Bunyan. 324 pages. $2.

**Do.** and **Grace Abounding.** 651 pages, illustrated. $2.

### American Book Co., Boston.

**Pilgrim's Progress,** edited by Grace Latimer Jones and Marguerite I. Arnold. Eclectic English Classics series. 208 pages. 48 cents, net.

Textbook style, containing the Life of Bunyan by Macaulay (abridged from the "Encyclopedia Britannica"), a chronological table of Bunyan and his times, the map of the Pilgrim's progress printed on another page, the text of Part I of "Pilgrim's Progress" in ten Stages, Suggestions for Study, and Notes, which give Bible references.

Obviously it is a complete little volume for a thorough understanding of the immortal allegory.

**John Bunyan's Dream Story,** Retold for Children and Adapted to School Reading by James Baldwin. 198 pages, illustrated. 52 cents, net.

Part I is divided into 24 condensed selections, Part II into 14. The young reader thus gets the gist of the story.

Every division has a headpiece drawing, in addition to ten full-page drawings.

### Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago.

**Pilgrim's Progress.** 127 pages, illustrated, paper covers. 25 cents.

One of the well known Moody Colportage Library series. Complete text of Part I, with several drawings by Dalziel and others.

A useful edition for distribution, Sunday school classes, etc.

### E. P. Dutton & Co., New York.

**Pilgrim's Progress,** illustrated by Pape. $2.

**Do.** Everyman Library. 80 cents and $1.60.

**Do.** King's Treasury of Literature. 45 cents.

### Macmillan Co., New York.

**Life of John Bunyan,** by J. A. Froude. English Men of Letters series, $1.25; library edition, $1.40.

**Pilgrim's Progress,** edited by J. H. Moffatt. 48 cents.

**Do.,** arranged by J. M. Matthew. Illustrated, $1.75; colored illustrations, $2.40.

**Do.,** illustrated by H. J. Ford, $3; smaller edition, $1.40.

**Do.,** edited by J. Morrison. $1.

**Grace Abounding** and **Pilgrim's Progress,** edited by J. Brown. $4.

**The Life and Death of Mr. Badman** and **The Holy War,** edited by J. Brown. $4.

### Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York.

**Pilgrim's Progress.** 332 pages. Nelson's Classics series.

The full text of Parts I and II, with Index.

**Do.,** illustrated by Byam Shaw. Honor Books series. 393 pages, illustrated, decorated covers. $1.50.

A choice edition for younger people. Sixteen rather fine full-page illustrations in colors. Parts I and II included.

### Oxford University Press, New York.

**Pilgrim's Progress.** Select English Classics. 25 cents.

**Do.** World's Classics. 80 cents.

**Pilgrim's Progress** with **Grace Abounding,** edited by E. Venables and M. Peacock. $1.85.

**Pilgrim's Progress, Part I,** edited by E. Venables and M. Peacock. $1.50.

**The Holy War** and **The Heavenly Footman,** edited by M. Peacock. $1.20.

**Macaulay's Essay on John Bunyan.** Oxford Plain Texts. 20 cents.

**Macaulay's Life of John Bunyan.** Oxford Plain Texts. 20 cents.

**Dramatic Illustrations from Pilgrim's Progress,** by Mrs. G. MacDonald. 70 cents.

**Pilgrim's Progress,** illustrated by George Cruikshank. Standard Authors series. 382 pages, illustrated. $1.50.

A choice library edition, containing both parts, also a Biographical Introduction, and a General Index that is a great help. A score of drawings by Cruikshank are of course a unique feature.

### Fleming H. Revell Co., New York.

**Inside of Bunyan's Dream (The),** by Arthur Porter. 270 pages, illustrated. $1.75.

A new book, favorably reviewed in this magazine last month.

It is a topical and psychological study of the persons and places that appear in "Pilgrim's Progress." Of course one should read Bunyan first, then Dr. Porter is a most helpful guide to the allegory and its insight and application to present conditions.

### J. H. Sears and Co., New York.

**Pilgrim's Progress.** American Home Classics. 242 pages. 35 cents.
**Do.** Religious Series. 242 pages. 35 cents.
**Do.** Royal Blue Library. 242 pages. 75 cents.
**Do.** Juvenile Classics. 242 pages, decorated covers. 50 cents.
These four editions are printed from the same plates: good legible type, bound in library style. The only differences are in the mechanical make-up and the prices. The Blue Library edition is handsome, with gold leaf stamping on the cover and full gold top.

### John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia.

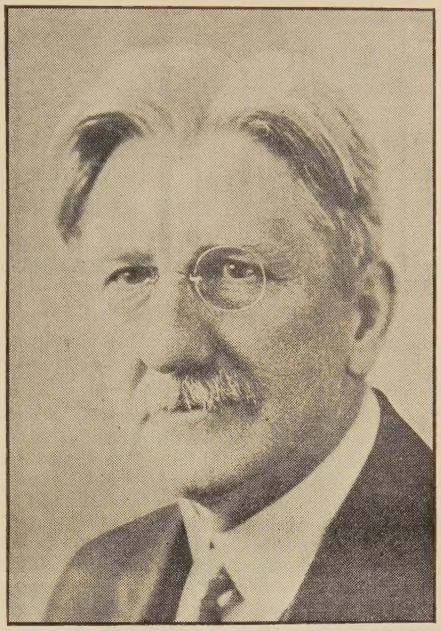
**Pilgrim's Progress in Words of One Syllable and Bible Stories for Sunday Afternoons.** 230 pages, illustrated, large type, decorated covers. Crown series. $1.
Unusually well made up for younger children. Size 7 by 9½ inches, large type. Decorated cover, with picture in colors. Numerous inside illustrations from drawings by Barnard and others.

Since Bunyan wrote in words of few syllables anyway, the changes in this edition are not startling, and they are kept true to the original.

### The Life of Prayer.

**Opened Windows of Heaven,** by Mrs. Ralph C. Norton. Evangelical Publishers, Toronto. 123 pages, with frontispiece. $1.
There are two Christian workers who are not as widely known as they deserve: Ralph Norton and his wife Edith, the the writer of this book. Since the war they have given their lives to the Belgian Gospel Mission, so called: a self-sacrificing effort to promote and establish gospel work in Belgium. This book tells some of their experiences involving struggle and failure of health and revival, etc., in this work, but it is chiefly valuable as a testimony to the ways of God in dealing with two lives consecrated to him and banking on his promises and prayer.

There is a pretty story of the events leading to their marriage. Mr. Norton was a DePauw graduate who had a short but successful business career before he felt called to train for Christian work. His wife-to-be was a student at the same school. After completing the course they engaged in evangelistic work. Then for two years Mr. Norton was religious work director of the Minneapolis Y. M. C. A., which he left to work with Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman and Charles M. Alexander. Ten years in this ministry, during which they traveled around the world twice, visiting many mission fields. Then the war, and service overseas.



*Dr. J. M. Powis Smith of Chicago, editor of "The Old Testament: An American Translation."*

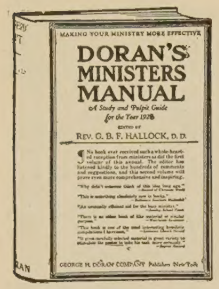
The contents of the book are intimate in character, but never offend good taste. The author writes with charm, but the spiritual flavor is the greatest treat of all.

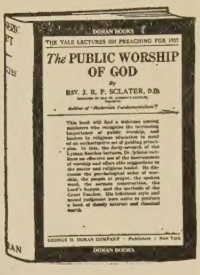
**Prayers of John Wanamaker,** with Introduction by A. Gordon MacLennan. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 160 pages, with frontispiece. $1.25.
A selection of Mr. Wanamaker's prayers when superintendent of Bethany Sunday School, Philadelphia, preserved in his own handwriting. They are arranged under subjects, from Adoration to Worship, and include 15 pages of seasonal prayers.

### Timely Volumes.

**Doran's Minister's Manual, 1928: A Study and Pulpit Guide,** edited by G. B. F. Hallock. George H. Doran Co., New York. 680 pages. $2 net.
This third annual volume may be counted a member of the family now. The contents are much the same as in previous years,—about 12 pages for every Sunday in the year, giving sermon outlines and added suggestions for morning and evening services, illustrations and stories, Sunday school lesson helps, C. E. topics, Midweek Messages, etc. Lest a minister should be all spoon-fed there are two blank pages for Sermon Notes each week; also a blank page for Engagements.

The volume will pay for itself as a reference book on the study desk, and with it a




*New Doran Books.*

minister or leader need not be nonplused if he is called on at short notice. The Table of Contents is a classified index.

**Year Book of Quotations from Contemporary Women (A),** compiled by Mrs. Newell Dwight Hillis. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 114 pages. $1.35.

Daily selections for 52 weeks, two pages to a week, from the writings or words of women living since 1920 (except Edith Cavell and Mary Slessor), showing a wealth of inspiration and good cheer and sound counsel. The idea is a happy one, and will no doubt catch on with the sister sex.

### The Study of the Bible.

**"Better Things": Bible Readings on the Epistle to the Hebrews,** by J. Gregory Mantle. Christian Alliance Publishing Co., New York. 250 pages. $1.25.

Third edition of a book that stands the test of time. The devotional content and application of the epistle are developed in a dozen topical chapters.

**First Corinthians, Part II** and **Philemon,** edited by James Hastings. W. P. Blessing Co., Chicago. 259 pages. $3.50.

13th volume in the Speaker's Bible series, following the same plan as previous volumes. Better write the publisher for a descriptive circular!

**Luke, the Most Beautiful Book Ever Written,** by D. A. Hayes. Methodist Book Concern, New York. 100 pages. 35 cents.

Prof. Hayes has prepared this booklet for the Epworth League, containing a study of the author, sources, date, etc., of the Gospel of Luke. About 60 pages give a "Characterization of the Gospel" in 10 sections.

**Patmos Vision (The): A Study of the Apocalypse,** by G. B. M. Clouser. I. M. Beaver, Reading, Pa. 253 pages.

The author has been a student and teacher of the dispensational school of Bible interpretation for over 30 years. He believes the Bible as it is, and expounds Revelation from that standpoint in the present volume.

**Peter, Prince of Apostles: A Study in the History and Tradition of Christianity,** by F. J. Foakes-Jackson. George H. Doran Co., New York. 320 pages, illustrated. $2.50.

Prof. Foakes-Jackson is one of the greatest of living authorities in early church history and personnel. This book is enough to make a man's reputation, so full it is of material, and so ably set forth. It should be said that several other scholars are credited in the Preface with substantial aid in the book.

The author contrasts the two early unquestioned leaders, Peter and Paul. While Paul is credited with having formulated Christian doctrine, Peter, he says, may be of even greater importance in so far as he has been associated with the other outward manifestation of Christianity, the organized church. And while Paul's life and career are well known, little real information about Peter has survived. His figure is only dimly seen. "When we search for a strictly historic proof even of his ever having visited Rome, we have to acknowledge that it is wanting."

In spite of this shortage there are enough archeological clues and traditions and lines of influence to make 21 fat chapters. A couple of chapters are preliminary, then come Peter's call and training and other incidents in the Gospels and Acts. The relations between Peter and the other disciples and Paul are surveyed, and his canonical epistles are subjected to criticism. Leaving the New Testament we come to such questions as, Did Peter visit Rome? Four chapters discuss various angles of this problem. Peter in the literature of the early centuries, his immense influence in England and in the Christian world and in Jewish legend fill five chapters.

The frontispiece pictures the statue of Peter in the crypt of St. Peter's, Rome, and there are five maps.

The study is done by a master hand. Of course it is history, not devotional exposition or exhortation. But it is a great book for a Bible student.

**Prophets of the Dawn: The Beginnings of the Religion of the Spirit,** by William Pierson Merrill. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 173 pages. $1.50.

Chapters that are more than sermons on Amos the Pioneer, Hosea the Poet, Isaiah the Statesman, and Micah the Tribune. Also chapters on the background of these men, and the growth of the spiritual movement they proclaimed.

Dr. Merrill is a leading Presbyterian minister in New York City.

**Prophets of the Old Testament (The),** by Alexander R. Gordon. George H. Doran Co., New York. 364 pages. $2.

Prof. Gordon of Montreal is one of the

*Remember the young people on your Christmas list with good books!*

translators of the new "Old Testament: An American Translation," reviewed last month. In this book, which follows conventional lines, he uses the new translation in his remarks.

The scope of the book is from "The Dawn of Prophecy" to "Jonah the Missionary," in 25 chapters. The higher critical historical view of Scripture prevails. Jehovah is called "Jahweh." The author apparently regards the gift of prophecy as a form of religious enthusiasm which may be "found in religious revivals generally down to the present day," the difference being in the character of the gods worshiped.

**Sermon on the Mount (The): Jesus' Description of the Christian Life,** by Chester Warren Quimby. Methodist Book Concern, New York. 62 pages. 25 cents.

The Sermon is divided into eight sections expressed thus: the Characteristics of a Christian, Matthew 5. 1-12; the Mission of a Christian, 5. 13-16; etc. A modernization of the Sermon translates the ancient Oriental customs and manners into modern Western ways. The elaboration of the outline is in the form of a questionnaire, with enough information to keep it going.

**Studies of Great Bible Cities,** by Henry T. Sell. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 136 pages. 50 and 75 cents.

Dr. Sell has already a dozen study books to his credit, with a combined circulation of 350,000. This volume arranges the material in textbook form for a study of Babylon and Nineveh in the Old Testament, and of Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Athens, Corinth, and Rome in the New. City life and smaller cities also receive attention.

This ought to be a fascinating course of study, and of course it is well done.

**When Antichrist Reigns,** by Oswald J. Smith. Christian Alliance Publishing Co., New York. 148 pages. $1.

The fulfilment of prophecy has taken on new interest the past few years, as ancient prophecies seem to be having fulfilment before our eyes. Questions of current moral and political and religious moment are faced in the light of Bible truth as interpreted by the dispensational school. The author has a wide and confident grasp of his subject.

### Sermons and Essays.

**Christ and the Creed (The),** by Warren Akin Candler. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 134 pages. $1.25.

The Jarrell Lectures in Emory University for 1927. It is altogether appropriate that they should have been delivered by as eminent a representative of Methodism as Bishop Candler, especially as he was also an intimate friend of the man in whose memory the lectureship was established, the late Rev. Joseph Jarrell.

*New Revell Books.*

Your reviewer is in thorough agreement with the central position of the author, but he finished reading the book with a sense of disappointment that is near to distress.

The method of Bishop Candler is almost a perfect specimen of a type of apologetic that has been practically discarded. It is resounding declamation rather than patient argument. It verges at times upon a kind of invective that suggests the oldtime hustings or "debates" between denominational champions. It leaves the impression of special pleading, and ex parte treatment. The use of extended and frequent quotations from but one or two books is also a source of weakness.

It is difficult for one who knows college students to believe that these lectures were especially effective in attaining their desirable object.—W. O. S.

**Jesus as a Philosopher,** by Herman Harrell Horne. Abingdon Press, New York. 208 pages. $1.

A little book containing 11 radio talks broadcasted by Mr. Horne through the courtesy of the Radio Corporation of America (WJZ). Mr. Horne is professor of the Philosophy of Education of New York University. There has been a wonderful response from the radio talks, some 2000 letters having been received by the author: and the publication of this book is the result of numerous requests.

They are wonderful little talks; wholesome, splendid in their moral uplift. There is a wide range of topics, besides the one that gives the book its title, such as Patriotism, Happiness, Business Success, Immortality, Friendship, A Boy's Life, Expecting the First-Born. They touch the everyday thinking of men, and in short spicy, pithy words say things not easily forgotten.—S. C. H.

**Present Tense of Salvation: A Group of God-Honored Revival Sermons,** by John W. Ham. Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 176 pages. $1.35.

Fourteen sermons of evangelistic tenor by one of the successful evangelists who works mostly in the South. It is good to get a volume of revival addresses these days.

**Two Words**, by Margaret Slattery. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 56 pages. 65 cents.
The two words are Yes and No. In five chapters Miss Slattery relates experiences of young people in making decisions, and shows how everyday decisions determine character.

## ALSO RECEIVED.

**The Betrayal of Jean Whitney**, by Keith L. Brooks. Biola Book Room, Los Angeles, Cal. 55 pages. 50 cents.
A modernist and evolutionist is called to the pastorate of a church. He conducts a Question Box, and an answer to Jean sends her into a godless life. She falls into the hands of white-slavers, and dies after an auto wreck. The tragedy of her ruin and death proves effective in evangelistic meetings after the modernist pastor has vacated the church. A dramatic bit of fiction with a purpose!

**The Christian Approach to the Jew: Being a Report of Conferences on the Subject Held at Budapest and Warsaw in April 1927.** Presbyterian Board of National Missions, New York. 208 pages.
Every student of Jewry will need this official report. We hope to review the work of those conferences in a later issue as based on this report, but meanwhile please note the contents:
"The Jew and the Gentile: A Story of Despair and Hope," by Dr. James Black of Edinburgh;
Findings adopted by the conferences, given in English and in German;
Resolution concerning the International Hebrew Christian Alliance;
List of members of the conferences, over a hundred without duplications;
Special papers written preparatory to the conferences; and
Directory of Christian missionary agencies working among Jews.

**Double Duty Dominoes.** National Good Games Co., Siloam Springs, Ark. 50 cents.
A domino set of 36 pieces, made of composition material, with numbers instead of spots, and with quotations on each half. One quotation is from the Bible, the other from general literature. The themes of quotations run from Sin to Heaven.
Matching is done by the numbers or by the themes.
This firm has several games of this type intended to promote knowledge of the Bible and other good ends while engaged in play. Send for their catalogue!

**Peter Donnelly, An Exile for Christ**, by James Grubb. Book Room, 11½ Lower Abbey Street, Dublin, Ireland. 15 pages. One penny.
Peter was raised a Roman Catholic, but believed on Christ through reading a Bible. He became a Protestant, endured persecution, received training for Christian work, and came to America, where he died.
The pamphlet is intended for circulation among Romanists.

**A Protestant Catechism for Young Americans.** Fellowship Forum, Washington, D. C. 31 pages. 25 cents.
If you want to know the worst about Romanism in small space, here it is! The extreme bitterness of the pamphlet will kill its usefulness with those who need it most, but it claims to give facts.

**The Relative Place of Women in the Church: A Joint Report.** Federal Council of Churches, New York. 68 pages.
An interdenominational study of the place of women's organized work in the church, first as laymen, next as ordained ministers. A summary is given of the Biblical and actual status of women in the church, with a survey of tendencies. The exact attitude of 114 denominations is listed in an appendix.

**Young Men and the Church.** Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, Philadelphia. 19 pages. 10 cents.
All about the Young Men's Fellowship, why it is desirable, how it can be organized and run, what it can do.

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### Suggestions for January.

The Federal Council and other societies are urging the reading of the Gospel of Matthew during January, one chapter each day, and the Gospel of John in February.
The American Bible Society of New York publishes penny editions of both Gospels, paper covers: postage extra one cent for one copy.
The Bible Institute Colportage Association of Chicago publishes emphasized editions of both, cloth covers, at four cents a copy: postage extra one cent on one copy.
Encourage the simultaneous reading of these Gospels by procuring copies for your S. S. scholars and other friends! Last year the American Bible Society alone sold nearly half a million copies of Luke under a similar plan.
Another good idea is to give your S. S. scholars a vest pocket edition of the Gospel of Mark while the lessons are in Mark, January to June.

## AMONG NEW BOOKS.

**A. B. C. of Psychology for Religious Education (An)**, by Eric S. Waterhouse. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 121 pages. $1.
**America's Future Religion**, by Joseph A. Vance. Revell. 160 pages. $1.25.
**Are Missions a Failure?** by Charles A. Selden. Revell. 270 pages. $2.50.
**Bluegowns**, by Catherine Dease. Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America, Maryknoll, N. Y. 224 pages, illustrated. $1.50.
**Changing Foreign Missions**, by Cleland Boyd McAfee. Revell. 288 pages. $2.
**Christian Conquest in the Congo**, by John M. Springer. Methodist Book Concern, New York. 151 pages, illustrated. $1.
**Christianity Step by Step**, by Charles Guignebert. Macmillan Co., New York. 507 pages. $4.50.
**Church and the Church School (The)**, by William Everett Chalmers. Judson Press, Philadelphia. 186 pages. $1.
**Church and the Russian Revolution (The)**, by Matthew Spinka. Macmillan. 330 pages. $2.50.
**Drums in the Darkness**, by John T. Tucker. George H. Doran Co., New York. 202 pages, illustrated. $1.75.
**Explorer of Changing Horizons (An): William Edgar Geil**, by Philip Whitwell Wilson. Doran. 372 pages, illustrated. $4.
**Golden Rule City (The)**, by Edna M. Bonser. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 260 pages. $2.
**Instincts and Emotions**, by Roger W. Babson. Revell. 181 pages. $2.
**Maryknoll Mission Letters: China, Volume 2.** Macmillan. 402 pages. $3.
**Missionary Methods for Church and Home**, by Katherine Scherer Cronk. Revell. 190 pages. $1.50.
**Modern Worship**, by Von Ogden Vogt. Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn. 153 pages. $2.
**Plastic Age of the Gospel (The)**, by Andrew C. Zenos. Macmillan. 264 pages. $2.75.
**Story Worship Services for the Junior Church**, by Mary Kirkpatrick Berg. Doran. 170 pages. $1.75.
**Treasure Trove for Little People**, by J. W. G. Ward. Doran. 208 pages. $1.50.
**Understanding the Apostles' Creed**, by Donald McFayden. Macmillan. 318 pages. $2.60.
**Universal Standard Speaker (The)**, by Frances P. Hoyle. Cumnock School of Oratory. 420 pages, illustrated.

**Any book acknowledged, reviewed, or advertised in this magazine will be forwarded postpaid by the publishers of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK upon receipt of the advertised price. Remit by check, postal or express order.**